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THE BATTLE OF THE GAP

MR. ATTLEE spoke in a House which had been led to believe that the Cabinet was at last ready to grapple firmly with the foreign exchange crisis with which this country is faced. Members knew that, if the present trend continued, we should end 1947 with a visible trade deficit amounting to at least £550 millions, and possibly as high as £600 millions. On "invisible" account, Government expenditure on overseas commitments, originally put at £175 millions, would more likely total £225 millions. To set against this, there would be only "invisible" income falling within the probable limits of £75 millions and £100 millions. Thus the prospective gap might be as high as £750 millions and, at best, would be £625 millions. Given the conditions of free convertibility of sterling, it is not surprising that we should have drawn £537 millions' worth of dollars from the U.S. loan this year. The balance of £250 millions still in hand would be exhausted well before the end of the year if the recent rate of drawings were kept up; and though it would be possible (if the Dominions and India agreed) to utilise perhaps £400 millions of our gold and foreign exchange reserve to finance imports, such a step would be highly imprudent in the absence of drastic and urgent measures to make this last remaining financial ammunition last as long as possible.

To say, however, that there must be retrenchment is one thing; to evolve an effective programme, and to obtain public support for it, is another. To declare that imports must be cut and belts tightened is not a policy; it is only an emergency step from which a constructive policy must start. Only on two conditions will the people of this country accept cheerfully a call to fresh austerity and harder work. One is that the burden of sacrifices must be fairly apportioned. This means that if there is to be any interference, direct or indirect, with the freedom of workers to choose their employment, there must also be restrictions on the price which the capitalist can charge for his products and on the profits which can be appropriated for private investors. Similarly, if working-class purchasing power is to be "dis-inflated," whether by unemployment, higher prices, or quantitative curtailment of supplies of consumers' goods, then there must be a parallel deflation of accumulated wealth by means of a capital levy.

Next, the people must be told plainly to what end the sacrifices are being demanded; and they must be convinced that the steps which are proposed will be effective to that end. This means that there must be not only a scheme of emergency cuts, but a long-term plan which makes sense and for whose accomplishment men and women can reasonably be asked to forgo present leisure and material satisfactions. It is no good expecting a favourable response to a programme which cuts about £200 millions a year off imports of consumers' goods but fails to deal radically with the £200 millions represented by "commitments" abroad palpably too onerous to be sustained. It is idle to imagine that people will work harder "to make a Socialist Britain economically independent" when they realise that "independence" for these islands is a delusion which one glance at the figures of the import-export gap should dispel. Either we become a satellite pensioner of the United States or we reverse the whole trend of our post-war foreign policy and integrate ourselves with Europe. As strictly "national" Socialists we cannot survive.

It is in the light of these considerations that the Prime Minister's speech on Wednesday must be judged. Going to press, as we do, before the two-day parliamentary debate is concluded, we must reserve our fuller comments on the Government's policy until our next issue. The first impression, however, which Mr. Attlee's declaration creates in our mind is that the Government has not yet achieved a united view of the long-term policy for whose furtherance immediate cuts in consumption are to be imposed. The Enabling Bill is to give the Government all the powers it requires to control supplies both of raw materials and labour, and so to bring about the necessary reorientation of production and exports. But we look in vain for any firm assurance in the speech that the Government is yet facing up to the two vital issues—drastic reduction of military commitments, and recognition that hopes of British recovery based on multilateral trade and free exchange are a pipe-dream. The common man is urged to work harder; but is it only that the country may go on carrying a preposterous load of rentier claims and costly foreign policy?

Announcing import cuts which mean less food, fewer houses and the postponement of vital schemes of industrial re-equipment, Mr. Attlee left one question unanswered. Is the battle of the gap to be fought in order that Britain, freed from the dollar grip, may play her part in a co-ordinated European economy? In that case one may inquire why Mr. Attlee did not announce that we should take the essential step of intimating our inability either to carry out the restrictive provisions of the U.S. Dollar Loan, or to continue unconditional convertibility of sterling, and why he had nothing to say about the possibility of re-opening trade negotiations with the U.S.S.R. Or is appeasement of America, in the hope that a further loan of dollars may serve to ease austerity, still the dominant feature of Cabinet policy? Is the crisis programme to be regarded, by and large, as a piece of window-dressing, designed to persuade Wall Street that Britain is a good investment?

If, as we fear, the rumoured proposal to shelve the nationalisation of steel, coupled with the decision to deal gently with American petrol and films and to retain Armed Forces on a scale acceptable to the U.S. Chiefs of Staffs, implies that the Cabinet still entertain the sneaking hope that Uncle Sam will come to the rescue of a Britain which "behaves well" in Wall Street's eyes, then the task of the Government's friendly critics in the House is only beginning. They will have to remind the Cabinet that the British people will only show enthusiasm for a campaign whose object is to make us more independent of American capitalism, and whose long-term strategy is constructive and intelligible. If the present programme—with its utterly inadequate cuts in the Services and its vague appeals to Business to co-operate—is the Cabinet's last word, we shall stagger on from crisis to crisis.

Trade Unionists and the Crisis

It is perfectly reasonable on the part of the miners to say that, if they are to be asked to work harder, other people whose labour is needed must be called upon to do the same. Nor is it less reasonable for the workers in the mass to say that, if they are to be required to make further efforts and sacrifices, they must have good assurances that other people, who are not industrial workers, shall not be allowed to get away with doing nothing. The workers will put up with a great deal, and will be ready for a big effort, only if their sense of justice is satisfied; and they have a feeling that "work or want" has too much the aroma of an exhortation from "them" to "us." The Trades Union Congress General Council is not always, in such matters, a reliable transmitter of the popular feeling; but on this occasion its members are probably convinced enough of what their members' attitude is to make them take the right line. For one thing, they will be bound to observe that the notion of redistributing labour by starving the less essential trades of raw materials will not work. Not only is it far too slow to meet the need: it will also involve a great deal of hanging about in the factory doing nothing and of unemployment of the less mobile workers, and will cause intense local irritations. Something much more positive is needed, in the form of incentives provided by differential wage-rates or ration-scales. If, moreover, there is any question of cutting food subsidies and allowing the cost of living to rise, it will be possible to avoid inflationary wage movements only by some real planning of wages in relation to labour needs. It may have to be stated that there is not a "national wages policy"; but whatever it may be called, that is what it must be.

When the Loan is Spent

When the Loan runs out, Great Britain will still need dollars. Whence are they to come? There are, in present circumstances, only two sources—our remaining gold and dollar reserve, and the sum which we are entitled to draw in exchange for sterling under the Bretton Woods Plan. Presumably we shall, at an early stage, have recourse to the latter source of funds; but it will not last us long unless the restrictions on the sum that can be drawn in any one year can be substantially modified. The question that will arise as soon as we apply to the International Monetary Fund is, of course, that of sterling convertibility. The Bretton Woods Plan itself allowed five years before the member countries were required to assume the full burden of convertibility. We, as a condition attached to the American Loan, agreed to accept the obligation of full convertibility of current sterling not in five years but in one; and we are already suffering from the effects of this unfortunate conversion. If it is allowed to hold good, what we draw out of the International Monetary Fund will be used, as the last instalments of the Loan are being used, to finance other countries' dollar purchases as well as our own; for they will use their sterling receipts not to buy our goods but to meet their pressing bills in America. If this is allowed to happen, our Bretton Woods quota will be eaten up in the twinkling of an eye.

The Tory Line

Mr. Churchill's speech at Blenheim last weekend indicates clearly enough the way in which the Opposition intends to exploit the crisis. The Tories will not produce any positive alternative policy of their own. Their line will be to attack the Government for having frittered away the dollar loan on unessential imports and on extravagant Armed Forces—a charge which comes quaintly from Mr. Churchill's lips. They will support any remedial measures which are "truly in the national interest" and are not partisan or inspired by "class jealousy." That is, they will endeavour to exploit the crisis by arguing that a united effort can be obtained only by the abandonment of all further "controversial" instalments of Socialism and by doing nothing which could be construed by Wall Street as inimical to the capitalist way of life. Indeed, the need for "an ever closer association with the United States" was the keynote of Mr. Churchill's address. The English-speaking world, he declared, "must move forward in fraternal association along the lines of destiny." The rhetoric is magnificent; but what Mr. Churchill appears to mean, in cold fact, is that Britain must endorse unreservedly the Truman doctrine, must cooperate submissively (as Mr. Harold Macmillan urged in Parliament on Monday) in rebuilding Western Germany under American domination, and must live indefinitely on short commons in order to find the men to mount guard in America's advanced bases in Europe and the Middle East. The British people may be thankful that Mr. Churchill is not, in fact, the controller of their "destiny," as he sees it.

Yugoslav-Bulgarian Agreement

The visit paid to Marshal Tito by M. Dimitrov, the Prime Minister of Bulgaria, has resulted in a pact which is partly political and designed to provide for mutual assistance in the event of a Greek incursus into Macedonia, but is aimed primarily at closer economic and cultural cooperation. There is to be an extension of rail and road communication between the two countries; the Yugoslav-Bulgarian rate of exchange is to be stabilised, and there is to be joint planning of mutual schemes for electrification, mining and agricultural and industrial development. There is no reason to suppose that this means that either Bulgaria or Yugoslavia intends to modify greatly present policy aimed at an economy which is balanced and, as far as possible, self-sufficient. Even were a far-flung Eastern European Customs union eventually to take shape, embracing Czechoslovakia and Poland as well as the Balkan countries, it is most unlikely that either Yugoslavia or Bulgaria would be inclined to remain predominantly peasant countries dependent on Czech-Polish manufacturing capacity. The new pact between Sofia and Belgrade is to be regarded rather as one more step towards insuring against the effects of a permanent partition of Europe. To suppose that the Governments of Eastern Europe want deliberately to cut themselves off from trade with the West is an error: they are well aware that their various reconstruction plans call for the provision of capital goods which they would like to obtain, if they can, by means of interchange of commodities with the Western democracies. But if the Marshall Plan has the result of detaching Britain and France, together with the minor Western European powers, from the rest of the Continent, then the series of agreements now being concluded by the countries within the Russian orbit will at least provide them with stable markets and planned co-operative use of limited resources.

Conversations in Washington

After various rumours of postponements and cancellation, it now seems clear that the Strang Mission will begin on August 12 conversations in Washington about the future of the Ruhr, if not of Western Germany as a whole. It is less clear what brief the Mission will take with it. If we are to go by Mr. Bevin's statement in Parliament on Monday, the British Government is not prepared to agree to any action being taken in the British Zone which would crystallize the partition of Germany before the Foreign Ministers meet in November. Mr. Bevin also said that he would not be a party to handing the heavy industries of the Ruhr back to their pre-war owners, and that he was exploring possibilities of international control plus ownership by some form of public authority. On the American side, however, indications are that the State Department shares General Clay's view that the rehabilitation of the Ruhr should be carried out by a German Board under an American chairman and with the assistance of American technical experts. If the British Government were to agree to turn over the Ruhr to an authority constituted on American lines, it would presumably demand, as a *quid pro quo*, the assumption by the United States of the financial responsibility for all food imports required by the British Zone. Is the State Department prepared even to discuss this aspect of the problem? All the evidence is to the contrary. Thus, next week's talks seem likely to begin under the great disadvantage that there is no prior agreement as to the nature of the agenda.

Uno and Indonesia

At midnight on Monday the Dutch and the Indonesians both accepted the Security Council's request to cease fire. Till the last moment the Dutch manœuvred against the Indonesians, even to the extent of holding up the transmission of the Security Council's Resolution from noon on Saturday until 8 o'clock on Sunday night. This enabled Dr. Van Mook to announce his Government's decision to accept the Uno decision while casting doubts on the ability of the Indonesian Government to comply with the Council's request. The Indonesian reply to the Security Council asked it to take into consideration the technical difficulties in carrying out the "cease fire" order, as the Dutch had damaged lines of communication. It also asked that the order should be controlled by a third (neutral) party, which would seem wise in view of the thinly disguised war-lust of some Dutch military and naval personalities. The Indonesians also propose that the Dutch armed forces should withdraw to at least the demarcation lines established by both sides on October 1st, 1946. The justice of this demand is obvious, but it would be breaking all imperialist traditions for the Dutch to accept it, and it is very unlikely that the point will be pressed except perhaps by the Australians, the Indians and the U.S.S.R. The next step is at the moment uncertain. The Dutch have accepted the offer of American mediation. The Indonesians have now expressed their preference for an international commission which would give them a better chance of stating their case before world opinion. These facts are already well known to the British Government, which, we hope, will show the same understanding of the Indonesian case and the same disapproval of the Dutch attitude in public that they have shown in private during their patient efforts to avoid open warfare.

The Allighan Case

The Garry Allighan case is still *sub judice*, and will remain so until his return from South Africa which will enable the House to debate the report of its Committee of Privileges. This makes it improper to discuss the strictures which the Committee passed on his conduct. But the issues raised by the case will require careful study by M.P.s and eventually by the country. The House of Commons is not concerned with Mr. Allighan's conduct as a member of the Labour Party, as such, but with his conduct as a Member of Parliament. It does not, and cannot, officially recognise associations of Members into groups or parties, nor can it be concerned with the individual loyalty of Members to their parties. That is a matter for normal party machinery. The case, then, hinges very largely on the status of party meetings. If they are no part of the business of the House, no question of privilege directly in connection with them can arise. Until recent years, when meetings of this kind were usually held at the Reform Club or at the Carlton, their remoteness from the House was sufficient to make it clear that they were extra-parliamentary. Lately, however, owing to the growth of the Labour Party and the increased pressure on parliamentary time, it has been common for party meetings to be held within the precints of Westminster. Is this in itself sufficient to show that they have necessarily changed their character?

PARLIAMENT: Before the Big Debate

Wednesday

WHETHER the Lords have any real power or not, Labour Members can now be in no doubt that it takes an unconscionable time to disagree with their amendments. On Friday, the House sat nearly four hours beyond its normal time to hear familiar arguments repeated on the Town and Country Planning Bill. Monday's sitting dragged on till quarter to seven the following morning. This time it was consideration of their Lordships' first reactions to the Agriculture Bill and second reactions to the Transport Bill. The process of shuttling amendments to and fro between the two Houses theoretically need have no end. If their Lordships were really persistent, they could continue it until the next Session is due to begin and deny Parliament any summer recess at all. Perhaps it is that longing for a holiday which unites both Peers and Commoners that restrains them from such extreme steps, and makes them content with penalising the Commons for their intractability by keeping them out of bed.

In any long-drawn-out sitting there is always a crisis point between one and two a.m. If that patch, when tempers are least under control, can be safely passed, the House may expect to rise before three. If trouble breaks out then, the journey home is by workman's ticket. On Monday, the Opposition wanted some figures to substantiate the Government's contention that a 25-mile radius is better than a 40-mile radius. The Minister said that he had already given them. After a short period of "I did," "You didn't," Eden, accompanied by offers from Pritt to make his speech for him, moved the adjournment. The motion was not accepted and the House was in for it. Cross and witty speeches were subsequently made until the close, to the evident pleasure of a Strangers' Gallery containing members of the public who had presumably missed their Bank Holiday trains.

Monday's debate on Germany was quite properly treated as a curtain-raiser before the big show on Wednesday and Thursday. But curtain-raisers should be witty and incisive: this debate was not. Macmillan and Law both tried to argue that the British Zone was Socialist Britain seen through a fun-fair mirror, the same evils of a controlled economy magnified and distorted to tragic absurdity. Their recommended cure—the re-establishment of S.H.A.E.F. and free German enterprise—was abruptly turned down by Mr. Bevin who succeeded thereby in getting the Tories to vote against him on foreign policy for the first time in his life. Other Conservative backbenchers were much better informed and less inclined to argue from a polemical Party brief: notably Molson and Spearman, whose conscientious thoughtfulness on any subject makes up for their lack of vitality. From the Labour side came a gallimaufry of sense, nonsense and perversity. Maurice Edelman, first speaker for the Government after Macmillan, was, as always, competent and almost too well-balanced. He argued for international control of the Ruhr in order to integrate it into the European economy. Skeffington-Lodge, whose own heart is not small, pleaded that the Foreign Secretary should "Let that great big heart of his, caring as it does for all humanity, play its full part." Paget, on the other hand, wanted Mr. Bevin to clear the Russians out of Germany by a threat of Anglo-American force, while Platts-Mills forlornly declared for a struggle against the financial control of the U.S.A. "the real purpose of the Marshall Plan." Finally, Ashley Bramall launched a fierce attack on the hostility of many of the Control Commission officials to the aims of the Labour Government. The Foreign Secretary, who had chosen to answer the debate, obviously had his mind on other things. His speech was a remarkable mixture of shrewdness and incoherence. If the four German politicians, in the gallery, as guests of the Hansard Society, expected to discover what British policy was, they were disappointed. But at least they realised that Parliament is a meeting place of many minds, in which even the remarkable admission of Evelyn Walkden that he was the mysterious Mr. X, who received a weekly payment of £5 from the *Evening News*, was heard with silence, if not with sympathy.

PHINEAS INC.

AS OTHERS SEE US

THE House of Commons has expressed its dignified disgust at the murder by the Irgun of two innocent hostages. Hooligans in Liverpool, Manchester and London reacted more brutally to this atrocity by staging anti-Semitic riots. When he sees such a picture as the *Daily Express* chose to display on its front page on the day after the bodies were discovered, the ordinary citizen cannot distinguish between condemnation of a few thousand terrorists in Palestine and hatred of Jews as such. Only a tiny minority break shop windows; but the majority, though repudiating such actions, feel, stirring within them, a latent anti-Semitism. If we are honest, we admit to ourselves that we react more violently and more irrationally against Jewish crimes than against similar brutalities committed by non-Jews. During the whole of the last war no one in England broke the windows of shops with German names, despite all the Nazi crimes. Now, Jewish shop windows are broken. This is a contrast Cabinet Ministers, as well as ordinary citizens, should ponder.

The most dangerous anti-Semite is the man who says that he does not know what the word means. We are as deeply involved in the tragedy as the Palestine Jews. It is our men and their men who are being killed. The Englishmen sees only the picture of two corpses dangling in a eucalyptus grove, with booby-traps attached. The Palestine Jew sees a different picture, a hero of the Czech resistance, a Jew who had done his share in the defeat of Hitler, hanging in a British prison yard in Palestine although he had shed no British blood. Stirred by the most primitive passion, neither Jew nor Englishman is likely to be impartial.

How does the tragedy look to neutral eyes? Unless we deliberately blind ourselves, we must admit that, in every country of Europe and the New World, our British policy in Palestine has caused dismay to our friends and given our enemies cause for reviling. Whether we are right or wrong in what we have done, we have shocked the whole civilised world; and even so good a friend of this country as Léon Blum cannot disguise his personal revulsion. This is another fact which Cabinet Ministers, as well as ordinary citizens, should ponder.

It may be replied that we are misunderstood and that the reporting of the world press has been one-sided—especially in America. But has our own press reporting been any less one-sided? If we are misunderstood by the rest of the world, have we not wilfully failed to understand the Jewish case and the weaknesses of our own moral position? These are questions which Cabinet Ministers, as well as ordinary citizens, should ponder.

Up till now we have been judges in our own cause. Next September the Palestine problem will be discussed by the United Nations Assembly. We should realise that world opinion cynically believes that Britain will try to hold on to Palestine as a military base, whatever the Commission reports and whatever disasters this implies for the Jews of the National Home. This again may be wilful misunderstanding. On the other hand, it may be based on a correct assessment of the politics of oil.

Here at least is something that Mr. Bevin can do towards the solution of the problem on which he has staked his reputation. If he wishes to save British lives, to check the spread of anti-Semitism in this country and to save Britain's good name, he can declare, *before the Assembly meets*, that, under no conditions is Britain prepared to continue a Mandate or Trusteeship detested by every Jew and Arab. He can make it clear that, whatever the Assembly may decide about the future of Palestine, British troops and officials will have left the country within six months of the decision.

Such a declaration would undeniably be a declaration of failure. Maybe the task, imposed upon us by the ambiguous terms of the Mandate, was impossible of fulfilment and the failure was therefore not our fault. But who, impartially observing the present horrors in a country under British rule, can deny that *we* have failed, whatever the mistakes of the Jewish Agency and the Arab Higher Committee? It is high time to admit this to ourselves and to draw the consequences.

HOW TO MEET THE CRISIS

IV.—THE EXPORT TRADE

THE greatest obstacle to recovery is the belief that this is a temporary crisis resulting from the war and that it can be put right merely by increased coal production or by cuts in imports or by a fall in the American price level: "The central problem is coal and power and upon this everything else depends. The second problem is to expand the nation's labour force, to increase its output per man year. . . . Next is the problem of payment for our imports and the necessary condition here is a steady recovery of our exports towards the target level of 140 per cent of 1928 volume which must be reached by the end of the year. These are necessary to restore the foundations of our national life." So runs the Economic Survey published only in February last. Even Mr. Douglas Jay writes: "Nearly everyone now knows that the foreign exchange problem is the over-riding issue at present facing this country."

If we accept this explanation, we shall flounder from one crisis to another. The facts are quite different.

Apart from the war period the world has never fully recovered from the slump of 1929-31; production, trade and investment have never reached the 1929 figure. The primary cause of that slump was a shortage of purchasing power, which, although removed during the war by Lend-Lease and Unrra, returned when they came to an end. The shortage of purchasing power is aggravated to-day by the economic consequences of the war in Europe and Asia and the enormous increased productivity in North America. All this when added up means a dollar famine despite the world's needs, an inability on the part of most countries to buy, and finally a world slump in 1948, the beginnings of which are with us now.

The U.S.A. dominates the world in all fields of investment, production and trade; she counts, at the present moment, for more than all the rest of the world put together. Her position is different from Britain's in the nineteenth century because she is not dependent on the import of food and raw materials. She cannot succeed to the role in this century that Britain played in the last, since the economic problems of this century are different, i.e., industrialisation of backward countries, growth of tariffs and the decline of world trade in manufactures. Under a system of uncontrolled private enterprise, mon poly and capitalism, the U.S.A. cannot supply the necessary purchasing power at home for the consumption of her enormously increased production. Moreover it doesn't appear likely that she will be willing to give sufficient dollars to the fifty odd countries in the world to enable them to revive their trade with one another.

During the last thirty years while the production of manufactures rose 100 per cent, world trade in manufactures failed to rise. In the nine chief industrial countries of which Britain is one, trade in manufactures fell by 20 per cent. For this a number of factors is responsible, but it is gradually being realised that as more countries learn to manufacture the mutual advantage in international trade in manufactures becomes less. For Britain the fall is of enormous importance

as our exports to-day are in manufactures. Thus, in view of the world trend, however much we may increase this production we will not find markets for that production to the same extent, except perhaps in high quality and capital goods. If we were an exporter of food and raw materials we would have no difficulty. In 1870 we had 2 per cent of the world's population, one-third of the world's manufactures and two-fifths of the world's exports in manufactures. By 1938 we still had 2 per cent of the world's population but only one-tenth of the world's manufactures and one-fifth of the world's export of manufactures. This makes completely false any hopes of an economic recovery based on attaining 175 per cent of our pre-war exports.

It is in the light of this background that the remedies must be propounded. Most contributions to this discussion look first, and often only, for short-term remedies. Short-term remedies are mere palliatives unless the right long-term steps are taken first. If we can be satisfied that the situation is being put right on a long-term basis the short-term remedies won't appear so unbearable. We could have accepted the American Loan with all its conditions if the period of the Loan had been used so as to reorganise our economic system and enlarge our area of trade so that we would not require a further loan when it ran out.

Let us look, in the first place, at the long-term remedies. They are of two kinds. First, the reorganisation of our own industry, including agriculture; second, the extension of the area within which we can trade so that we and the other countries of Europe can secure the benefits of a market large enough for large-scale modern industrial production.

British industry compared with American, for whatever reason, is inefficient. We lack mass production, standardisation and the full use of machinery. There must be a drastic reorganisation of all our industries, including agriculture, to secure greater production, cheaper production and more efficient production. This means, first, relatively fewer firms in each industry—perhaps only one or two in each—and secondly the concentration of our industrial effort upon a smaller number of specialist industries. It means also the negative direction of labour, the introduction of incentives, a profits policy or a capital levy, Government participation in ownership and real workers' participation in management.

The second remedy is to become part of a larger economic area within which to buy and sell. The economic problems which confront Great Britain—shortage of foreign exchange used for raw materials, and lack of markets—confront the other States of Europe. For each it is essential that their market or trading area be greatly extended. The States of Western Europe provide about seven-tenths of the world trade in manufactures. Between the wars the countries of Europe doubled their tariffs. Western Europe with its colonial territories, together with the British Commonwealth and Empire (excluding Canada and India) have as great a supply of raw materials and economic resources as the U.S.A. In the sixteen chief metals, in seven other minerals, in the seven chief textiles, and in the fourteen chief foodstuffs, such an economic union would exceed, in raw materials, the resources of the U.S.A. Only in vegetable oils, seeds and nuts does the U.S.A. have more. The enormous prosperity of the U.S.A. is due primarily to her industrial and agricultural industries being organised under one control with a free trade market of 120 million people. If an economic union of the fourteen States of Europe who recently came to Paris could be secured, there would be a free trade market of 200 million people with a common market and a real opportunity for economic recovery resting on their own resources and efforts.

The Marshall offer asked Europe to set out her requirements. How much better if the Paris Conference devoted its energies to working out a plan whereby an economic union could be created so that the resources, capacity and manpower of Western Europe could be harnessed for the greatest advantage of the people! In this way an effective area of free trade for each of the States would be created large enough, and reasonably self-sufficient in raw materials, for mass production to be successful, as is the case in the U.S.A. and in the U.S.S.R.

Until we take definite steps to reorganise our own industry and to extend the economic area within which we function we have not applied any long-term remedy to our present economic crisis. The fault is not with others but with ourselves. We are no longer the workshop of the world. Mr. Bevin tells us that international trade is the life-blood of this country. I can understand him saying that to the miners to secure increased production, but I do hope he doesn't believe it himself. It was our life-blood in 1913 but it has ceased to be, and the queues of unemployed between the two wars were evidence of the change for those who had eyes to see and minds to understand.

If we reorganise our own industries and take steps to create a free trade area in Europe, then the future can still be secure. The immediate steps to tide us over are not difficult to take. They may involve hardships, but the British people will accept these, provided the sacrifices are equally spread and shared. To meet the crisis on a short-term basis we should at once: (a) increase our food production and save dollars chiefly in dried eggs, vegetables and things of that kind (£100 millions); (b) withdraw troops from overseas and cut the Armed Forces to 750,000 by December of this year, so as to reduce Government expenditure abroad (£200 millions); (c) cut imports of unnecessary things such as tobacco, petrol, films and such other items, but not necessary foods or raw materials required for specialised exports (£100 million); (d) at once freeze all sterling balances until other countries will agree to fund them, spreading repayment over fifty years; stop convertibility, or limit it to the actual annual surplus on current account and end non-discrimination. The exceptional circumstances provided for in the American Agreement exist and give us this loophole.

Such steps taken drastically and at once would solve the problem of our balance of payments. The reorganisation of industry and the creation of an economic union of Western Europe would lay the foundations for an economic recovery and make secure a decent standard of living not only for ourselves but for the peoples of Europe as well.

R. W. G. MACKAY

ABOUT LIBERTY

Too much has been said about misunderstanding between Russia and the West. The break at Paris and the sharp division of the Two Worlds was not primarily due to misunderstanding, but to the rivalry of two systems each of which fears the other. The Russians believe, on theoretical grounds reinforced by much practical experience, that Western capitalism is inevitably and irrevocably hostile to the advance of Socialism. They are also persuaded that capitalism will itself break down through its own inherent contradictions; they regard an American slump as certain and hope to be heirs to the consequent European chaos. They have decided as far as possible economically to plan the area under their influence, without the aid of dollars. The rulers of America are terrified of a slump which would everywhere aid the growth of world Communism. Because they are uneasily aware that all their atom bombs and vast war potential will be unavailing to prevent the spread of the Communist idea if capitalism cannot in fact prevent "increasing misery," the wiser heads in Washington are seeking, by an appeal both to the generosity and self-interest of Americans, more effectively to combat Communism by means that will also save themselves from a slump and Europe from hunger and chaos. Here is a division, not a misunderstanding.

There is, however, one misunderstanding which has played a destructive part during the last two years. It appears in polite diplomatic despatches and angry conference interchanges; it is reflected in the correspondence that reaches progressive newspapers. Those who try to understand the revolution in process in Eastern Europe are accused, for instance, at one and the same time, of selling the pass of liberty and of showing anti-Soviet bias. Such accusations are due to intellectual misunderstanding.

Since the days of classical antiquity, civil liberty, which we rightly regard as our most important achievement, has seldom existed except in countries which have passed through the phase of liberal capitalism. Liberty, as we know it, was only struggling for recognition in England three hundred years ago, and it did not exist in France two hundred years ago. The basis of civil liberty is an independent judiciary. This battle was won in Britain in the 17th century, which also saw the victory of the idea of representative government. So in Britain, when we talk about democracy, we commonly mean representative government on the basis of individual liberty and minority rights. *Habeas Corpus*, free speech and the right to vote seem to us ingredients of a single democratic idea. But democracy in the French Revolution meant, in the first place, not Locke, Montesquieu and the "division of powers," but majority rule, and government in the interests of the masses instead of a privileged few. This is what democracy still means in countries which have passed direct from feudalism to Socialism. It would be a miracle if such governments were tolerant. After our own very mild seventeenth-century revolution a century and a half passed before a Protestant Government felt sufficiently secure to grant civil rights to Roman Catholics, who had been once in alliance with a foreign enemy.

It is historically true, therefore, that civil liberty is a late growth which can only exist when society, as the Marxist puts it, has reached a stable synthesis. For the time being, surrounded by enemies and with the experience of Hitler's success in mobilising Hungarians and Rumanians against them, the rulers of Soviet Russia are determined to run no risks of another capitalist or Fascist reaction in such countries. As always happens in dictatorships, the secret police becomes an irresponsible power within the State, committing excesses far beyond the needs of security and often regretted—sometimes publicly—after the damage has been done. What can we do in such a situation? My own view has always been that, agreeing with Mr. Churchill that Russia could reasonably insist on "friendly governments" in Eastern European countries, we should send there Ambassadors capable of understanding and working with their revolutionary governments, and, while refraining from useless demands for Western forms of democracy, do all we can legitimately to encourage the idea that tolerance pays and that civil liberty is important. Public scolding and diplomatic threats and economic pressure increase the intolerance and, since they encourage the counter-revolutionary class, strengthen the secret police. On the other hand, statements like that of Mr. Bevin when he recently returned from Poland often do immense good.

If we in the West often make the mistake of assuming that democracy and civil liberty are one and the same thing, Communists often make an even more dangerous mistake in thinking that, because liberty is historically derivative, it is not of its own right an immensely powerful sentiment. It is true that Americans frequently confuse liberty with the unlimited rights of private property and that they do not apply their belief in civil liberty to Negroes in the Deep South. It is true that the British, who talk so much about national independence, fought for the opposite principle in Ireland and only granted independence to India

when they were no longer rich enough and strong enough to enforce their imperialism. Western democrats, like other people, are apt to spot the mote in their brother's eye and miss the beam in their own. But inconsistencies are quite compatible with faith, and belief in civil liberty, once it is firmly established, becomes its most cherished possession. There have always been anti-imperialists in Britain and many people of good will in America who have fought steadily for Negro rights.

I have recently heard it said, I think truly, that it would be impossible ever again to persuade the British people to fight for property, but that they might again be induced to fight for liberty. In truth in this country the defenders of property, in the sense of the right to exploit and to enjoy the products of other people's labour, are not now very powerful in England. But the hatred of cruelty and injustice, the belief that a man should not be imprisoned without trial or denied the right of free speech—these sentiments are strongly and deeply held by members of all classes. No one, except the Russians themselves, could have undermined their immense prestige in 1945. Anti-Soviet headlines in the newspapers would never swing any important section of the British working classes into hostility to Russia; they are not in the least troubled by the extension of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe or because of Soviet propaganda directed against British interests in the Middle East or elsewhere. But instances of Russian kidnapping in occupied Germany, related in public houses by returning British Tommies, do have effect. So does a simple human fact like the Russian refusal to allow Soviet wives to join their husbands.

Marxists may argue, with reason, that Britain and Germany fought in the last war because Hitler's form of monopoly capitalism threatened to oust all competitors from Europe and finally to destroy the power of the British Empire. But if they recall how often they declared that British capitalism preferred an alliance with Hitler, in the belief that he would attack Russia, they may agree that the issue of surrender or war was narrowly decided in 1938 and 1939, and that the balance after Munich was tipped against Germany, not so much by a shift of opinion in the capitalist class as by the overwhelming belief among ordinary people of all classes that there was something peculiarly evil about Fascism, which had destroyed liberty in Central Europe and which relied upon thuggery and the concentration camp to maintain its autocratic power.

This sentiment of liberty may have sprung from special historical circumstances and it may be precarious in the sense that, given sufficient economical misery, counter-revolution might win in the West as it did for a time in Germany. But it remains the most powerful unifying belief in the West, and Marxist analysis makes its worst error in underestimating its force. Marx and Engels themselves recognised that the "superstructure" of ideology which develops in any society—"political, legal, philosophic theories, religious ideas"—"also exercise their influence upon the course of the historic struggles." No doubt it is difficult for the rulers of the Soviet Union to believe in the sincerity of those who declare that their trouble is not with the theory of Communism nor with the spread of Soviet economic power, but with the practice of Soviet administration. Yet that is the fact, and it is the Soviet neglect of this principle of liberty that places Western Socialists in an intolerable dilemma. In France, for instance, as in England, the working class movement boasts of its own story of emancipation which has been a fight for civil liberty as well as for democracy. If Russia had understood the importance of both of these ingredients in the West a unified Socialist Europe could have arisen from the experience of the Resistance. During the war Social Democrats and Communists and Democratic Catholics learnt to live, fight and suffer together. That seemed to point the way to a Socialist Europe, achieved by struggle, but without war. Indeed, in days of the atom bomb, to think of the "inevitable struggle" between capitalists and workers in terms of world war is sheer madness. There is not even on the strictest Marxist analysis any vestige of guarantee or even probability that world Socialism would be its outcome. We may recall that as long ago as 1848, Marx and Engels in the *Communist Manifesto* remarked that of the previous clashes of classes the outcome had ended "either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the *common ruin of the contending classes.*"

TOM PAINE

THROUGH AMERICAN EYES

(From a Correspondent)

FORECASTS of Mr. Attlee's "crisis" pronouncement and of a coming "declaration of independence" by Britain have created little stir in the American press or in Washington, from whose August dog-days Congress has fled. Editorial comment has been scanty, and though the *New York Times* detects signs of a "new realism," most newspapers have been inclined to wait for proof that Britain really intends to work harder, and is not going to ask the United States to finance a further instalment of Socialism and short hours. Public attention is fixed rather on the wider issue of aid to Europe; and while Europe debates the American motives in making the Marshall offer, Americans debate whether they should make offer a reality, and, if so, what their motives should be. Nothing is as definite in the American mind as either Mr. Bevin or Mr. Molotov pretends it is. The content and meaning of the Marshall "plan" is at present part of the 1948 election campaign.

Had the plan borne the name of the Democratic President it would have had no chance of success. Even with the best will, no foreign policy so closely linked to one of the rival candidates could have received bi-partisan support. But George Marshall is not—and most people believe will not be—a candidate. Nor is he someone who can be accused of being a "do-gooder," giving away the country's substance; as the architect of American military success, his prestige is the greatest asset of the Marshall Plan.

It is highly significant that no contender for the Presidency has yet dared to come out against the Plan. Even Senator Taft, in his Columbus speech, was careful to give it limited support. It appears that in private most Congressional leaders, and a majority of the rank-and-file, support the Plan, but few are certain that they can convince their electorate. It was to give time for a nation-wide educational programme that President Truman decided against a special session of Congress this autumn.

Can the American leaders—of both parties—sell the Marshall Plan to their people? The three months after Labour Day (September 1st) will be decisive. In that time the supporters of aid to Europe have the difficult task of proving to the American people that such a programme is in their own interest, and to the people of Europe that it is not a purely selfish move to secure markets for American goods, and military bases.

Ever since Molotov left the Paris Conference it has been obvious that the strategic justification of the Marshall Plan would be its anti-Russian aspect. In private, Mr. Marshall has succeeded in convincing the top-flight Washington columnists and commentators that his object is a genuine over-all agreement with Russia, which can only be achieved through a strong policy which is *obviously* unaffected by fluctuations of economics or domestic politics.

The public, less thoughtful and less well-informed about the situation, regard Russia as an enemy who must be at least contained and preferably overthrown. But the use of force to achieve this end is rarely desired and less frequently advocated than press reports in Britain would make it appear. If Russia is aggressive—as the great majority of Americans believe—her victories are not won by open force of arms; therefore, America, too, has devised means for fighting a "white war." The Marshall Plan is, of course, popularly expected to win allies in Western Europe, who would be valuable shock-absorbers in the case of war. But few Americans outside the War Department believe that space is of any importance in push-button atomic war, so that the real value of these allies is confined in the popular mind to the economic war. The strongest single factor in favour of the Marshall Plan passing Congress is that its defeat would be a Russian victory. If there is a Molotov Plan for Eastern Europe, the American competition sense will be so much the more strengthened.

Congressmen who are aware of these strong arguments for the Plan amongst their constituents, also hear the pleas of a reviving isolationism. There are not many people who believe with General Wood that Europe must be written off as "a dead loss," but they are vocal and well organised. The Patterson-McCormick press has coined the nickname for the Plan "Operation Rathole," which sums up the view that any new loan will be frittered away like the British loan. It is not necessary here to argue this last point, but many Americans very friendly to Britain protest at the failure of the Labour Government to purchase machinery instead of tobacco and films with the dollar loan. The British fuel crisis, and the failure of coal production in the Ruhr (which Commissioner Moses informs the State Department is solely due to British mismanagement) have caused popular opinion to feel Britain is a bad economic risk. Isolationists argue that there should therefore be no further loans, and even official policy seems to be that Britain should be placed low on the priority list, with the Ruhr and France ahead of her.

The 1946 loan to Britain was sold to Congress unofficially as an anti-Soviet move, but officially as a move to free world trade and thus hedge against an American slump. To-day the Communist line—most eloquently stated by Togliatti—is that all American loans are simply attempts to export her unemployment. Regardless of the truth of the matter, such arguments cut no ice in America. Not one citizen out of ten believes that foreign loans are necessary to stave off a slump, because the present and immediate fear is inflation, not deflation. Senator Taft's blast at the Administration for raising prices at home by gifts abroad has had a very considerable welcome. It is obvious that any really effective plan of aid to Europe would put steel in even shorter supply than it is to-day. That would mean that, instead of waiting six months for a new car or refrigerator, Americans would have to wait a year. To those of us who are ordering cars now for 1951 that seems pretty swift, but to Americans it seems a serious prolongation of unnatural wartime conditions.

If the Republicans had only the industrial voter in mind they would probably find it worth while to oppose all loans to Europe, but they are traditionally dependent on the Farm vote. Whatever may be said about the adaptability of private enterprise, in fact the prolonged American boom is based on the prosperity of the American farmer, and that in turn is based on the world demand for American food. If the Kansas farmer with a record wheat crop this year did not have an unlimited export market he would be ruined; as it is, he is wildly prosperous.

If an American slump (as opposed to a mild shake-out of prices) is to come, it will be because the world cannot or will not buy American food. But that is not at once apparent to John Q. Citizen. During the autumn the Administration will have to convince the electorate that it is in its own interests to give away goods which it can at present consume itself. This is not an easy task, and one quite possible compromise is that Congress will only authorise the transfer of *goods* (not dollars at all) which are declared surplus. This would satisfy American opinion that they were being generous without being suckers. But it would also mean that America's gifts were smallest at this moment when Europe's needs are greatest.

A LONDON DIARY

THE week-end "leaks" about the Cabinet discussions on steel have caused a stir in the Parliamentary Labour Party. The case against the comprehensive nationalisation of steel next Session is a powerful one, quite apart from the political temptation to secure a quiet Opposition in a difficult period by making concessions to it. If steel were nationalised immediately, the technicians argue, industrialists would certainly set out to sabotage the plan. The Government rely for all their information about steel on Steel House, the headquarters of the Iron and Steel Federation, of which Sir Andrew Duncan is the head. There are no experts in the Civil Service capable of supervising any plan for steel or preventing the intelligent wrecking of one. The result might be a 10 per cent loss in production just when maximum output is most needed. The Cabinet consider such a risk is too great to take, and as a way out they offer two alternatives. One, a Bill next Session which would tinker with the problem by a compulsory purchase of some of the shares in the industry. To this Steel House is agreeable. The other is to abandon the project for another year at least in the hope that it will then be possible to do the job properly. The second proposition might well be acceptable to the T.U.C. It always held the belief that next year, not this year, would be the right time to tackle steel; and, in any case, it knows that there is no great enthusiasm for nationalisation among the steel workers.

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So, on the official trade union side, it seems that there would be no serious protest against leaving steel out of the King's Speech in October. It is on the political side that the main trouble would develop. Steel has now become the chief test of political power; if the Government retreats, the impetus of Socialist legislation will be lost and may never be regained. This is the argument of many back-benchers, particularly the trade union members who, not being on the T.U.C., do not have close and frequent consultations with the Government. They see the problem from a political standpoint as it affects Parliament and the Labour Movement in the country in a way that the T.U.C. cannot. Accordingly they are determined, with other rank and file members, to dig their toes in. They are not prepared to admit that the Government should give in for fear of possible sabotage. If the Cabinet adopt the course of postponement they may have an easy passage with the T.U.C., but *not* with the Party.

* * *

W. H. Thompson talked like a cynic but behaved like an idealist. True, as a highly successful solicitor he made money out of the rich, holding that the worker was always entitled to all the compensation he could get from his employer. But he took no money from the poor. In my long experience of Thompson as a man and a lawyer I have never known him fail to respond to an appeal to help the underdog. I have often thought that in any tough spot, either personal or political, I would have relied on Thompson more than any other solicitor I have ever heard of to show the ability, courage and toughness to see one through. I could fill this page with reminiscences of his services to the Labour Movement, and I hope the job of writing his biography falls into good and objective hands. It will uncover the less conspicuous, and often the more amusing, aspects of the fight against Fascism in this country; it will have a grand story to tell of Communist trials and hunger marches. It should include Thompson's own anecdotes of legal battles lost and won; it will be a story of a continual struggle for justice, spiced by Thompson's own coruscating comments on those who suffered the injustices as well as those who inflicted them. At the moment I feel he is irreplaceable. A great opportunity exists for someone else in the Labour Movement with his legal knowledge, hatred of injustice and zest for battle.

There is a kind of poetic justice in the appointment of Krishna Menon as Indian High Commissioner to England. It is proof of the reality of Indian freedom. Krishna Menon might have been a highly successful barrister. He has all the gifts, including brilliant forensic ability. But during the twenty-five years I have known him in this country he has never allowed any ambition to compete with his absorbing passion for Indian freedom. I am not saying that he has always been wise as a propagandist, but no one could help admiring his devotion, shown in a severely ascetic life, dogged by poverty and ill health. Now he comes to the country, against which he has fought, to represent his own free nation. And, after a year's close work with Jawaharlal Nehru, to whom he is personally devoted, he brings with him a new and responsible consciousness of the problems that face Britain and India.

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A friend just back from the Russian Zone in Germany tells me that there is a marked contrast between the position of university, and would-be university, students in the East compared with the West. In the Russian Zone, even a blameless political past does not make good the handicap of a bourgeois background, which makes it difficult to get any but menial work, and is usually a bar to entry into the university. This routine discrimination is causing much bitterness, and little attempt has yet been made to distinguish between the good and the bad. The majority of students recently matriculated have a working-class background, and 40 per cent of them are women. At one of the new institutes designed to prepare specially selected products of elementary schools for the universities, the students are specially picked for their proletarian background as much as for their capabilities. Over 90 per cent of them are members of the S.E.D. The reason, the Russians explain, is that although the Christian Democrats and the Liberals are repeatedly asked to provide suitable candidates, they have not got enough young people with the obligatory working-class background. Another feature of the Eastern Zone is the generous paper supply—much higher than in the rest of Germany—which makes possible an abundance of books. Since the surrender, some 35 million German books—half of them textbooks for the new *Einheitsschule*—have been printed there, and Leipzig appears to be well on the way to recovering its former dominant position in Germany's book production. Evidence of its capacity is the fact that at least two or three times the number of books produced for Germany have been printed in Russian, despite the destruction of many presses, and the removal of others for reparations. On the general subject of confiscation of industrial equipment for reparations, there are no official figures available. But the plant which remains is operating full time on a basis of about 25 per cent of production for the home market and 75 per cent for Russia. From the Russian share a sufficient quantity disappears into the black market to even things up. There is complete frankness about this procedure and equally frank grumbling over the food situation, and fears of a repeated fuel shortage in the winter. But to offset the grumbling the official rations are being regularly met in full, or made up whenever they are a week or two delayed.

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To apply rationing to restaurant meals here would surely be good psychology, but looking into the facts a little more, I have been surprised at the complexities which would arise. Ten per cent of all the rationed foodstuffs in this country are consumed in canteens and catering establishments. Clearly it would be impossible to deduct quantities from the weekly rations for workers' canteens, schools and other non-commercial eating places. If that were done, there would undoubtedly be a sharp drop in production and legitimate grousing. The total amount consumed in profit-making restaurants is only 3 per cent of the whole, and even here there are difficulties. Many of them are given licences merely because they are close to factories without workers' canteens, and act as substitutes for them, or they are cheap restaurants used exclusively by low-paid office workers and shopping housewives. To inflict the collection of coupons on their customers would have the same disadvantages as rationing in the non-profit-making concerns. Of the residue, there are less than 300 restaurants, consuming a negligible amount of food, entitled to make a house-charge, although it is true that many others insist on the maximum five shillings for a meal. It is, then, only this tiny group of "luxury restaurants" which would lend itself to a rationing scheme. But it is perfectly possible to have a very full meal in one without ordering meat or using, to any considerable degree, rationed foodstuffs. I gather, however, from Mr. Attlee's speech that he expects to find a way of overcoming these difficulties.

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Whether they are bent on business or are off on an August holiday jaunt, travellers by air are out to save time: whatever their destination—Paris, Prague, or (if they are unlucky) Paradise—they want to get there quickly. But, though the air-speeds of post-war civil aircraft are high enough, nothing has yet been done to shorten the inordinate delays between airports and air terminal. I realise that airports have generally got to be located at a time-wasting distance from the centre of a city; but there is one simple change in procedure which, I should have thought, might knock at any rate half an hour off the journey from one city to another. Why shouldn't there be a duplication of Customs and passport control officials at either end of the principal Continental routes? In other words, why should not travellers embarking at Croydon for Paris have their passports and luggage checked simultaneously by the British and the French authorities, so that they could go straight from the aeroplane to the bus at Le Bourget without that tiresome hanging about which seems so inappropriate in journeys designed for speed?

POLYCRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to R. Dunnett.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

In her dread of the "public scandal" that would be produced by the birth of a baby within four months of her son's marriage, it must be confessed that the pursuer's mother had the support of her husband, who betrayed in the witness-box a somewhat ludicrous sense of his own importance in the public life of Edinburgh as the layer of main gas pipes.—*Edinburgh Evening Dispatch.*

A man of 84, asking a council to find him a wife, added that he would make the woman happy because he was a comedian in World War I.—*Daily Mirror.*

No space now for batting and bowling averages. Cricket (and playing the game) was an English tradition—too clean and wholesome, I fear, for the Socialist dictators.—Letter in *Sunday Express.*

"Bobby," known as Britain's "most loyal canary," because he was believed to be the only canary to sing "God Save the King," has died at Bexhill.—*Star.*

Chef (4 in kitchen), staff 12, family 2, for very good post Surrey; very good wages; first-rate kitchen and accommodation.—Advt. in *The Times.*

Popular exhibit at an ATS At-Home at Guildford was the car chassis on which Princess Elizabeth learned how motors work.—*Evening Standard.*

OLD SAWS—MODERN INSTANCES

Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more!
Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour!
All great events their shadows cast before!
Getting and spending we lay waste our power!

Once did we hold the gorgeous East in fee!
Repent! Your doings and your ways amend!
Neither a borrower nor a lender be,
For loan oft loses both itself and friend!

Ill fares the land to hastening ills a prey,
So bad begins but worse remains behind!
Westward the course of Empire takes its way!
A little more than kin and less than kind!

Ah! let the credit go and take the cash!
Think on the cause of present discontents!
Fight the good fight! Who steals my purse steals trash!
Our poverty, but not our will, consents!

Pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
Made weak by time and fate but strong in will,
We ride the whirlwind and direct the storm!
England, with all thy faults, I love thee still!

SAGITTARIUS

PLANNING OR POSTERS?

To plan or not to plan has become one of the most over-simplified political issues of the day. It is almost the only question on which a Gallup Poll would fail to produce a "don't know" section. The first hundred men you meet will consist of uncompromising planners and uncompromising anti-planners; and not two of them will have the first idea of what is meant by, and what is involved in, planning on a national scale.

The planning function consists of the marriage of resources and needs. Needs are determined by a twofold process: (i) by political decisions (e.g., budgetary decisions, allocations of resources to foreign aid and to military expenditure, attempts at autarky, etc.), and (ii) by the free play, within the limits of the political decisions, of demand. Thus, the first task of the planner is to assess the level of demand of all goods and services, in order that one may add up the resources (labour, materials, power) required to satisfy that demand.

Now level of demand is a function of two sets of factors—an economic set and a technical set. In addition to demand-variations due to fashion-changes, which are not highly significant, demand for all goods and services varies, of course, with total purchasing-power; but there is also a variation of demand, within a given level of purchasing-power, according to its distribution amongst the community. Thus, if total purchasing-power goes up with roughly the same distribution, the community will want both more milk and more mink coats; if the same purchasing-power is more evenly divided, the community will want more milk but less mink. This, then, is the first set of variables to be assessed, and its assessment is clearly the job of the economist.

Most people who talk about planning stop at this point, and forget the technical set of variables. All we've done up to now is to assess demand in terms of end-products; but any given end-product makes a different demand on material and labour resources with every change in design and manufacturing method. Plastics and the light alloys have altered the balance of demand for timber, steel and clay; and presses mean more press-operators but fewer panel-beaters.

This latter set of variables is highly complex because of the great and increasing degree of interdependence between industries. To assess the effect of a change of demand in one end-product involves going back through a long series of materials, ancillary products and background services. Take the simplest possible example and to follow it through only a very small part of the relationship-chain: more milk can't be obtained (other things being equal) without more rubber (for cowmen's boots and lorry tyres), more waterworks pumps (for washing cowsheds and bottles), more weighing-machines, cattle cake, buildings, steel, fuel, labour, and so on. Extend that process from a bottle of milk to a house or a combine harvester, and take it back through all its stages, and see where you get.

Complex, but not impossible. The formulae to calculate the economic variables, and to extend the results back through the industry-chain, have been worked out, after some years of research, by Professor Leontiev, of Harvard, and a calculating machine has been developed to make the extensions. Thus, one can calculate in a few hours the changed demands for all materials and for labour of all occupational types flowing from any change in (i) total purchasing-power, (ii) distribution of purchasing-power, (iii) material utilisation, and/or (iv) manufacturing method.

Just as it is the function of an economic general staff to plan and control the first two of these change-sources, so we need a scientific/technical general staff to plan and control the second two. Even when we have done all that needs to be done in redistributing labour and materials towards the essential trades, and in raising the level of industrial management, there are still three main fields of activity for a technical general staff. The first of these is to redistribute the resources of each industry towards the more efficient production units in that industry. The capitalist system has travelled so far from true competition that we have many industries in which the best plants are ten to twelve times as efficient as the worst—but the worst still go on, recklessly wasting much more labour than can ever be made up by "extra effort now" on the part of the individual worker. In a few industries, like building, the backward sector is the greater part of the whole industry. There are some products on which output-per-operator could be trebled by shutting down 70 per cent of the factories making them and concentrating the materials, and some of the machinery and labour (with double-shifting in some cases), in the remainder.

The second responsibility of a technical general staff is to do much more than is at present being done, or even contemplated, about redundant work in research and design. The waste of technical manpower from this cause is staggering. The chemical, aircraft and motor industries are particular sinners in this respect, but perhaps the worst and wickedest waste, in a field in which we could least afford it, was the overlapping which resulted in the design of 1,300 types of prefabricated houses, which were eventually watered down to four because a lot of designers were all busy making the same mistakes independently of one another.

The third, and perhaps the most important, job for a technical general staff is what Professor Bernal has pungently called "the wardenship of the elements." Nothing could increase our national wealth so quickly as putting to use a lot of the materials which at present go into dumps, into sewers and rivers, and up chimneys. There's gold in these by-products, including that very valuable by-product, heat-waste—and we use only a small proportion of them. Many raw materials, if their use is planned in terms of national flow-sheets, like the flow-sheet of an individual factory, can be used *cyclically*, in the way that Nature uses nitrogen; but the free market generally allows the circle to be broken at some point and the material to go (literally) down the river. That's why so many stretches of our waterways are hot brine baths—thick with valuable trade effluents, and warmed with coolants and other forms of waste heat.

Coal is an outstanding example. We are in an industrial strait-jacket for want of another twenty million tons a year, yet there are 100 million tons waiting to be picked up by raising our efficiency of coal utilisation from the present average of 20 per cent to the figure of 30 per cent, which is by no means out of reach. (The 45 million tons a year we use domestically is burned at below 15 per cent efficiency; and even in power production we get only 21–22 per cent—a figure which can be raised to 50 per cent by the fullest possible use of waste heat.)

These three aspects of our industrial life need to be centrally planned, because the necessary adjustments can't be made by the normal commercial mechanisms, which operate too slowly at any time and scarcely at all in a sellers' market. When goods can be sold even when they're inefficiently produced, the low-cost plant doesn't squeeze out the high-cost plant, and redundancies in ancillary functions are mopped up in selling prices. The average business man, when he's making a lot of profit anyway, doesn't watch so keenly the finer points of material conservation. Paradoxically, one of the worst handicaps in the task of reorganisation is the full order-book: and in the matter of industrial efficiency nothing fails like success.

Since, then, this is a job which will be done by the Government or not at all, it is pertinent to inquire how seriously the Government is tackling it and how far they've got. One result may be quoted of the half-hearted nature of our central economic planning so far. A beginning has been made in the formidable task of adapting the Leontiev researches to British needs, and one of our best young economists is, amongst others, engaged on this work. But the job is making very heavy weather, and nobody in authority seems to be bothering much about it.

On the technical side, the position is even worse, for the Tizard Committee is in a much weaker position than the Plowden unit. Like the latter, it was set up belatedly; it includes a high proportion of anti-planners; it has no powerful channel to get its views accepted; and it operates only through the painful process of one-sided negotiation with vested interests.

Because there is no functioning central planning mechanism, other agencies which are worried by our economic position have to take their own measures—with a disproportionate expenditure of effort—towards stopping up industrial leaks. The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions is circulating a questionnaire to shop stewards of its constituent unions on the present work of, and hold-ups in, engineering shops and shipyards. That's a grand, public-spirited effort, but it's ironical that workers have to compile from the shop floor information which is much more accessible through official channels.

This wide disparity between the nation's needs and the Government's performance in the field of central planning makes utter nonsense of the "Work or Want" campaign. The Government, in fact, is behaving precisely like a general who goes up to the front line to address his troops on the eve of battle, and holds forth as follows:

"My dear, brave front-line troops, Victory depends on you. We have at last got a General Staff, but it has little power to do anything, and it hasn't done much yet. We haven't done an awful lot about your supply services and your weapons. We know there are thousands of men elsewhere who ought to be with you in the front line, and we're trying to persuade them to join you, and maybe they will one day. We're leaving every officer to do what he likes about the efficiency of his own unit, and as most of them are better off than ever before they're not doing much about it. We're leaving such minor questions as logistics and strategy to sort themselves out in their own way. But it's not your business to worry about that. All you've got to do is to fire a couple of rounds a minute faster than you do now. If you don't, we shall be defeated and it will be your fault. Shoot or we're sunk. Work or want."

That's what we're saying to our workers; but some of them—bad, obstinate fellows that they are—won't fall for it. Well I never!

IAN MIKARDO

THE BOND STREET BEES

"Oh! the Bond Street bees," said Katharine, looking as usual like the cover of *Vogue*; "I've got them." Whereupon she told me the true story of that rare event of a fortnight since.

They landed first on the window of Perez, the rug shop. Then finding that the window offered little resting-place for a swarm they flew up to the top of the electric street-lamp. This is of the kind which bends over at the top and hangs a bulb suspended, with a convex shade above it. The wide shade suited the bees admirably; they settled on it and built themselves up till the whole top from the shade to the apex of the standard was a thick furry pyramid of buzzing. Round the great swarm the outliers flew crossly, humming like a distant flight of planes.

Bond Street was entranced, of course. The passers stood, faces uplifted, mouths agape. Motors stopped. In five minutes a crowd collected, and with it a policeman to keep it in order. Buses passing at the Oxford Street end paused, and their occupants thought that there had been a fatal accident at the north end of Bond Street.

Katharine had an engagement with Perez to discuss some Bokhara embroidery. But when they mentioned the swarm, she said hastily, "Forgive me, but may I come later? I can manage those bees." For Katharine has a house in Westbourne Grove, and she has also two young tenants on her top flat; John and Hugh. And they keep bees.

She fled out of Perez, and realised that there was no time to lose. For the crowd was talking helpfully. There was Mr. Tomkins of Earl's Court who kept bees and would gladly take the swarm; but I ask you how was he to get to it? There was a police car by now, summoned by wireless, no doubt. But the police car seemed as baffled as anybody else by that belligerent congregation on the lamp. Then someone in the crowd said "Why don't they send for the fire brigade?" Instantly everyone was saying it; and the police car moved off—as in "Matilda,"

> To summon the immediate aid
> Of London's noble Fire Brigade.

But Katharine was flying to her adjacent office, and by this time she was feverishly telephoning the various places where Hugh might possibly be found. He might still be at lunch; very likely, since he was an official, apt to be doing Official Business over lunch. But she telephoned her house and she telephoned the British Council, and she telephoned his favourite restaurant, leaving the S O S at all.

Hugh, in fact, had returned from lunch, and was engaged in an Important Conference with an Important Person. A messenger came in and excused himself for interrupting, and hissed in his ear that there was a swarm of bees in Bond Street.

On the instant Hugh was dead to all other considerations. If it had meant dismissal, he could not have delayed. He said that he had received a call too urgent to be disregarded, and would the Important Person excuse him and see him later. He rushed out of the British Council and took a taxi to Westbourne Grove, where indeed he had a spare hive. On the way to Bond Street he put on his veil, and so a figure such as Bond Street seldom sees stepped out of the taxi. Katharine was waiting for him on the pavement. The crowd still gaped; the bees still buzzed, and Mr. Tomkins was eagerly expecting the fire brigade.

But Katharine is made of the stuff which won the Battle of Britain. She entered Perez, and said: "Have you got a long ladder?" And Perez had one. Why a long ladder in a rug-shop I can't think, unless it is to hang priceless silk Yarmouks upon the wall.

The staff of Perez and Hugh carried out the ladder. Hugh took his hive and ascended. And just as he reached the top, the police car rounded the corner from Oxford Street, followed by a full-sized scarlet, clanging fire-engine.

Too late, and poor Mr. Tomkins dancing with frustration.

The operation was not easy, for the ladder, naturally, could only be set against the standard beneath the shade. But almost at once the bees, spotting a nice dark front door, began to enter. Most of them went in, including the Queen. A few recalcitrants refused.

Hugh climbed carefully down. He saw a number of bees crawling about on the pavement. He brushed them gently into the hive with a gull's feather, the implement used for this purpose by careful beekeepers.

The bees which Hugh failed to cajole into the hive still remained to terrorise this fashionable thoroughfare. For days after, the police kept telephoning Hugh and requesting him to come and take them away.

This story is strictly true, which is why I have recorded it just as it happened. The only disguise, and I dare say it is transparent, is the names.

FREDA WHITE

The Arts and Entertainment

OPERA PROSPECTS

II—Should English be Compulsory?

For years now the out-and-out supporters of opera in English have had the argument all their own way. To confess to a preference for Wagner or Verdi in the original language was to brand yourself as a reactionary and a snob, and the opposition was pretty certain to refute you with a withering reference to tiaras, top hats and the supposed emptiness of the heads encircled by these outmoded objects. And now what has happened? Italian performances are given, in Seven Dials of all places, not for a few weeks at the height of the season, but right round the year, to enthusiastic audiences who can hardly, by any stretch of the term, be described as snobs. The fact is—though you would never guess it from the pronouncements of the eminent—that a considerable part of the case against translated opera is based on perfectly valid aesthetic objections; and that these objections suggest themselves, not only to the rich and fashionable, nor even exclusively to those who have a little French or German or Italian, but to all persons of musical sensibility who have had much experience of "the real thing." What is seldom recognised is the enormous recent increase in the number of such persons: I am not referring only to the experience of our forces in Italy and Germany (important though that is), but to the wide and continual diffusion, by wireless and gramophone records (and now by the film as well), of opera sung in the original tongue. In particular, the Third Programme has lately transported millions of listeners to the leading opera-houses of France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany and even Czechoslovakia.

If one result of all this diffusion has been to familiarise a big public with the sound of opera in its own language, another has been to acquaint it with Continental standards of singing. It is true that the general level of singing has fallen in other countries besides our own; nevertheless, a good many beautiful, rich and accomplished performances have been heard over the Third Programme in recent months, mostly from singers who are quite unknown in this country: for example, from the Czech tenor, Beno Blachut (in *Dalibor*), the Italian baritone, Gino Bechi (in *Nabucco*) and the French bass Louis Noguira (in the French version of Glinka's *Life for the Czar*). It is asking a great deal to expect musical people, with singing of this order uppermost in their minds, to go the next night to Covent Garden and sit politely through Mr. Carron's Manrico or Mr. Clifford's Papageno: the drop is simply too steep. The Covent Garden authorities have tacitly admitted as much in engaging several foreign singers for next season, including Kirsten Flagstad for *Tristan* and *Die Walküre*. No doubt pious horror was expressed by the die-hards when this proposal was first mooted, but the stern logic of the box office has prevailed; and furthermore, though Mme Flagstad has to learn (at this stage of her career!) an English version of *Die Walküre*, she is to be allowed, as a great concession, to sing *Tristan* in German. It would be interesting to discover, by means of a referendum, what proportion of her Covent Garden audiences would prefer to hear some English soprano as Brünhilde and Isolde; what proportion cares about the language question one way or the other; and, of those who do, how many will not positively prefer the use of the original German. But in such questions as these the musical consumer, being totally unorganised, is never consulted and can bring no pressure to bear either on the impresario or on the Ministry of Labour; whereas, as everybody knows, considerable pressure is constantly being exercised by professional organisations, the more bigoted of whose members would dearly like to exclude all foreign musicians whatsoever and thus bring about a state of complete cultural isolation.

I suggested last week that Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells ought to be run by a single management with a single large company wholly under its control. Even so, there are not yet enough good singers in England (though there is no reason why there should not be, ten or twenty years hence) to undertake all the leading roles at both houses from one end of the year to the other. Sadler's Wells, a true *Volksoper*, should continue to give everything in English with completely English casts, and its repertoire should consist (as to a great extent it already does) of those lively small-scale pieces which gain most from the use of our own language in a small theatre where it can be really heard; I mean such operas as *Figaro*, *Seraglio*, *Barber*, *Bartered Bride*, *Fledermaus* and *Falstaff*. Covent Garden, on the other hand, with a repertory built round Wagner, Verdi, Strauss and the heavyweights in general, should have no fixed prejudice in the matter of language. For obvious reasons, Russian and Czech operas (although their native speech-rhythms cause them to be among the worst sufferers in translation) had better be sung always in English; and in such works as *Meistersinger* and *Rosenkavalier* it may perhaps be that the pleasure of following rather more of the intrigue with the help of the English words (if only we can hear them!) outweighs the loss of ideal congruity between music and original text. But I can see no point whatever in laboriously getting up *Elektra* or the *Ring* or *Turandot* for the sake of principle in English versions of which three-quarters will remain inaudible to the most attentive listener in the house; especially when opera-goers are thereby debarred from hearing some outstanding international artist in these works. Nor need it be supposed that a decision to give, say, *Manon* in French with an adequate French heroine, instead of in English with an inadequate American one, will have the slightest effect, one way or the other, on the composition of English operas by English composers. The way to encourage our opera composers is not to sing Massenet at them in English, but to offer them commissions, with an undertaking to produce the result (if satisfactory) at Covent Garden or Sadler's Wells. As for our opera singers, so far from their prospects being injured, the habit of singing in several languages and alongside eminent international artists will give them an insight into the various styles and enable them to escape from the rut of provincial mediocrity in which they are at present stuck. On this point the experience of Glyndebourne and the Cambridge Theatre is decisive; nor, to take a famous instance, would Eva Turner have become the Aïda and Turandot we know if she had never had a chance to sing the parts in Italian and beside Italian colleagues.

Underlying much operatic discussion is a fundamental difference about the intrinsic importance of the voice. To hear some people talk, you might think that there was really no difference between one opera singer and another; so that, all singers being much of a muchness, we might as well invariably "buy British" in each and every case. The more scholarly supporters of this view cover their tracks by a lot of talk about "good ensemble" and "fidelity to the composer's intentions" being all that really

matters—as though one of the most important of an opera composer's intentions were not that his solo parts should be sung accurately, with beautiful tone and noble delivery. If a concerto were to be played in the Albert Hall half as poorly as one often hears arias (which are miniature concertos) sung at Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells, the whole musical press would be justly indignant; as it is, such performances receive polite and even enthusiastic notices from our leading critics, with the result that the public is bored and dissatisfied without quite knowing why, stays away, and is promptly rapped over the knuckles for harbouring that terrible vice, a "star complex." The truth is that the majority of the great roles of opera, in all periods and in all countries, were designed for beautiful voices with brilliant technique and ample tone; and the public, in demanding to hear such voices, is only showing itself to be in entire agreement with Mozart, Wagner and Verdi.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

RACINE

IT is now thirty years and four months since I began to criticise plays in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION. I know this because the other day I had occasion to look through those numerous if irregular contributions. What struck me was that so many had dealt with performances which only a comparatively small portion of the play-going public could have seen. And in saying that I'm not thinking only of those given (two nights and a matinée) by such well-known bygone dramatic societies as The Skye Society, The Phœnix Society, which after the war of 1914 gave us our first chances of seeing Restoration Comedy and Sub-Shakespearean Drama, or The Pioneer Players, who under the enterprising direction of Edith Craig and Miss Christopher St. John acted many an arresting play; nor only of performances at the smaller theatres (The Little Theatre, Everyman's, at Hampstead, The Gate, The Westminster) catering perforce for smaller audiences and seizing the opportunity to give them something out of the way. I am thinking also of our attraction that the obscurer haunts of Thalia and Melpomene, far from Theatre-Land, seem to have always had for me: large dusty rooms at the top of dwelling-houses, converted sheds or studios, scattered about London, where true but often inexperienced devotees pay their disinterested homage to those Muses—small groups of young enthusiasts, who despite inadequate stage-space, scenery, costumes, strive to interpret glorious or curious masterpieces. Yes, I have loved the atmosphere pervading these humble Temples. The scantiness of attendance at them never depresses me. (Up go my spirits though the tiny auditorium be half empty, for am I not about to look upon Enthusiasm? "Go on, go on," I fancy myself whispering across the few yards separating me from those enthusiasts. "None of your gestures or intonations shall escape me if I can help it. If they're wrong or flat I'll still be grateful. Even across your shortcomings I shall perceive the beauty of the work we both admire."

During the war, somewhere amid the heavy desolate pomposity of South Kensington, I saw *The Lady from the Sea* performed upon a stage about the size of two railway compartments, and I am still grateful for that most imperfect yet zealously searching interpretation of it. It taught me *what that play is like*. Last week I received illumination of a kind of which I stood in more need. Though, like many others, I understand Ibsen's qualities, I am far from realising, independently and apart from authority, the greatness of Racine as a dramatist: I went last week to the Rudolf Steiner Theatre to see the Bibiena Company's production of *Britannicus* and it was partially revealed to me. Of course, no English version (though Mr. Harold Bowen's seemed not unskilful) can transmit that poetry; and true enough without his austerely splendid, flowing verse Racine is not Racine. Yet the force, the interest, the dignity of a drama founded, not overtly upon psychology (though Racine's psychology is ever sound), but rather upon the logic of the passions—the dialectic of emotional conflicts—did survive. It was illuminating to note the opportunities for subtle interpretation on the part of actors, no matter how often they might actually be missed, this grand formal dramatic tradition provides; and to note how the unities of time and place by compressing everything into a series of confrontations, may intensify the revelation of character.

Everything that happens in the play takes place between morning and evening in one room in the palace of Nero. The historic moment chosen is when the power-hungry Agrippina (fit mother of a tyrant to be) is at the end of her own criminal career and her son is at the beginning of his—after three years of benevolent rule under the guidance of Seneca and Burrhus. Those tutors she had appointed herself, when at last by means of ambitious marriages, treachery and possibly poison, she had put him on the throne—only to be bitterly disappointed that he would not let her share it.

Early morning: the ex-empress, the widow of Claudius, is wandering restlessly with her attendant about the palace where she once reigned, furiously seeking an interview with her elusive son. (May I suggest that the stage might be rather dim at first while she explains to the shivering Albina her intolerable grievances.) But only Burrhus comes from the private imperial apartments, and then only to give her a piece of his honest but far from perceptive mind. (Let me put in here a word in praise of Mr. Robert Sanson and Miss Mary Hinton; throughout the elocution of both Burrhus and Agrippina was excellent.) Next we behold the boy Britannicus, by blood the rightful Emperor (Mr. John Benson, alas, often forgot he was a proud, frank young Prince), an easy victim for the sly Narcissus—Racine's Iago, who delights in playing like a malicious musician on Nero's tigerish propensities. Act II: that monster himself appears—and in love. In vain had his mother provided him with an impeccable royal consort. The night before he had sent his guards to abduct the princess Junia, who is loved of Britannicus and returns his love. Before that epoch-making Marquis was born, and centuries before psychologists made "sadism" a household word, Racine knew all about passion which feeds on pain: Nero loves Junia for the tears he can make her shed. How beautifully they glittered last night among the shining spears! How exquisite now to force her, in his hearing, to repudiate Britannicus, whose life will depend on her behaviour carrying conviction; and, then, Octavia divorced, to take the shrinking woman to his bed! That interview between the lovers takes place while Nero listens to them concealed. But he has still to deal with his imperious mother and with his mentor Burrhus, before those succulent artistic delights can be his. In Act IV (perhaps the best of all) Agrippina alone with Nero takes a fatal line. To appeal to his gratitude she describes to him every step, unscrupulous and dangerous, she took to place him on the throne. She even hints at those dark rumours that she had poisoned the aged Claudius after persuading him to nominate Nero as his heir. How many shades of feeling might not an actor betray while listening to that speech of "the best of mothers"! Nor did Mr. Shawn Noble who looked, like a handsome Domitian true to type, *d'un humeur triste et sauvage*, miss them all. But when Nero finally acquiesced in all she asked, I wanted then in his manner a hint of that Imperial mountebank who loved to win servile applause upon the stage. That night at a feast Britannicus and he will be reconciled before the Court—or rather Britannicus will be poisoned. Before, however, that plot, previously concocted with Narcissus, is carried through, Nero must face Burrhus; and this is a more formidable ordeal. Nero is even shaken; his mentor rouses his vanity. Can he bear, after all, to sacrifice his public name? But Iago-Narcissus, then playing on ths same string, rocks him round once more: the people of Rome despise him in their hearts for not despising them, for trying to win applause

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as an actor and charioteer, instead of compelling their adoration as a Caesar above all law.

That night, after Britannicus and Junia have found each other again, and while Agrippina is hugging her triumph, though Junia is still haunted by misgivings, a sudden clamour from the hall of feasting reaches their ears, and Burrhus rushes out: Britannicus has been poisoned by the loving-cup Nero offered him. Even such a skeleton account may suggest the compactness of this play and the subtleties that may lurk in its strong, simple scenes, and therefore how well worth while it was to act it, even though much escaped in performance and the beauty of the verse could not be heard. DESMOND MACCARTHY

"Dr. Angelus," at the Phoenix

Mr. James Bridie is a terror for talk. It makes no odds whether the theme be eugenics, Old Testament social conventions or the mental processes of cultured murderers from Glasgow—even John Knox himself was never so exuberantly articulate as his fellow-entertainer and countryman Mr. Bridie. It is this unabashed garrulity that is at once the salvation and downfall of *Dr. Angelus*. The theme is one that would have delighted Ben Jonson—but what a carefully contrived web of dramatic incident he would have spun to support this richly sardonic story of the humbug doctor who murders in cold blood, with the highest motives and under the assumption of a deeply affectionate and sensitive disposition. Mr. Bridie's story lacks tension and surprise; his characters undergo rapid and arbitrary changes as the action demands; he breaks all the rules and mixes macabre farce with coldly documented moments of realistic terror and pain; he concocts wildly improbable situations for the sake of the dialogue that will result from them; he even throws a little Websterian hokum into the well-oiled wheels of his naturalistic Jonsonian comedy of horrors. Yet Bridie wind-bags are still actors' dreams, and Mr. Alastair Sim, as the metaphysical murderer, scullery hedonist and disciple of Bacon, takes his chances as eagerly as Mr. Donat does at the Criterion. The lugubrious, fish-like eye, the pontifical, unctuous dignity laced with a little querulousness, the soupy voice and the immense command over the tricks of diction and gesture, all make Mr. Sim's bravura performance the excuse for a play that says little, wittily enough, but for rather too long.

The same cunning has given the production a smooth efficiency over detail and a tidy pace. The acting throughout is highly distinguished; one notices in particular the brilliance of Miss Molly Urquhart as the epitome of frowsy sluttishness, and of Mr. George Cole as a pathetically scruffy and naive young practitioner.

RADIO NOTES

No one would pretend that the Albert Hall possesses many advantages, from the musical point of view; but I have noticed lately that the extreme resonance, which creates echo when one is actually in the building, can produce some dramatically effective results over the air. For example, Beethoven's *Grosse Fuge*, which sounds horribly crabbed and scratchy when played by a quartet of soloists, clearly needs an airy vastness in which to deploy its giant-stride rhythms. The strings of the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra responded magnificently to Sir Adrian Boult's merciless beat, and altogether I think few people can ever have heard this perplexing score more convincingly translated into sound. This singular effect of size and depth, as though one of Berlioz's orchestral dreams had at last been successfully realised, was equally striking, though in a different manner, at the end of the Romanza in Vaughan Williams's Fifth Symphony, where the solo violin seemed to be lifted high above the rest of the orchestra. And in the episodes from Berg's *Wozzeck*, Miss Joan Alexander's beautifully steady soprano evoked a spot-lit figure on a darkened stage.

These acoustic peculiarities—no doubt accidental—suggest that the evolution of broadcast music, of film and gramophone recording, may proceed in ways which are not at present clearly foreseen. It appears, for instance, to be very generally taken for granted that the modern symphony orchestra, and the instruments which compose it, have long ago reached their ultimate stage of development. This view is based on the assumptions that the instruments themselves are not susceptible of further improvement; that the classical Viennese orchestra, increased during the nineteenth century by various additions to the wood-wind and percussion departments, provides a medium of expression which is incapable of extension; and that the balance of numbers, so often tinkered with in the past forty years, is now perfect. Where "live" symphonic or operatic music is concerned, there is justification for accepting these assumptions—although with reservations: instruments like the violin, the 'cello, and the flute may be perfect, but should we not welcome a French horn which combined the tonal purity of the "natural" horn with the technical ease of the German variety, on which bubbling is eliminated? Is it inconceivable that someone might invent a clarinet that had no weak transitional notes? That the oboe should somehow extend its range into the higher register of the flute? That the peculiar, dark quality of the viola may eventually be produced by an instrument of more manageable size? It is true that the more recent inventions, such as the saxophone, the Hammond organ and vibraphone, have so far usually been put to uses which have little to do with music; but composers of to-day, who must after all reckon more and more with the ubiquity of electrical reproduction, might do well to consider what such instruments could contribute to the problem of microphone balance—a problem which becomes especially acute when a big orchestral climax has to be built up.

It is notorious that the average Wagnerian Tutti—not to mention such huge, complex ensembles as the *Dream of Gerontius* or *Belshazzar's Feast*—is all but impossible to squeeze through a transmitting or recording apparatus with results that are at all like what one hears in a concert hall. Is it not possible that a totally different arrangement of instruments and their numbers might produce an orchestral climax that would not reach us as a mere flat blare?

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"It Happened on Fifth Avenue," at the New Gallery
"Moss Rose," at the Leicester Square Theatre
"Ramuntcho," at the Academy

Have you ever seen a happy millionaire on the screen? Or even a very rich man whose wife's affections have not been alienated from him by all that cloying money, aided by not more neglect and philandering than poorer families can take in their stride? Whose children are not aware of something lacking from the home, presumably love since it can't be comfort? Whose old friends have not deserted him, discouraged by butlers and such? Here he comes again, in *It Happened on Fifth Avenue*, that pathetic figure of the powerful business magnate who has forgotten what fun is like, until he is obliged to impersonate a tramp among other penniless persons, in order that his daughter may win the pauper of her heart without fearing that wealth will clog the courtship. Poor Charles Ruggles: such a nice comedy actor when he is given a comedy that is actable! Luckily into this threadbare plot are woven some beguiling minor portraits—the waiter driven crazy by the rocking of one of his tables and the small tailor.

This picture is another example of Hollywood's nervous addiction to the use of script-writers in a team, which means that the main story can be entrusted to those who will churn out a safe variation of a well-tried theme, while the young, keen and original are only allowed to try their hands in the irrelevant scenes: it is a method which ensures some, but not all, of the audience being bored for some,

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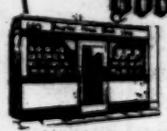

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but not all, of the time, according to whether they like the plot or the trimmings. It would be impossible, I imagine, to like both.

I enjoyed the idea of the down-and-out who acts as unofficial caretaker to one particular wealthy family, moving into their town house when they go to the country, and vice versa. But Victor Moore, who plays this part, is given so many embarrassing sermons to deliver, on the theme that kind hearts are better than bank balances, that I came to dread his appearance—a feeling unshared, apparently, by the magnate and his ladies, who can't hear enough of the connection between poverty and good comradeship. The strength of this bond in film circles makes one's heart bleed for the producers, condemned to make more and more money out of this seemingly infallible poor-little-rich-man story, and consciously dragged further and further from happiness by each repetition, all to content us with our relatively penniless state. If only they would give up the sacrifice or else face one of the gaunt facts about money: you can't take it with you but you can always let go of it.

Moss Rose raises longings for a different kind of honesty, social not financial, and British not American. How welcome would be a young English screen-actress with the nerve to talk Cockney as if it came natural to her, and hadn't been picked up through uninterrupted devotion to her art even at the Berkeley. The choice Edwardian chorus girls in this less-than-average murder-mystery have a tendency to be found dead of an over-dose of sleeping draught, with a moss rose in a Bible beside them. So do their Betters, if they stay in the stately home of one of the chorus girls' admirers. (This is the most class-conscious film I have seen for years. You should hear Lottie Collins's contemporaries yearning to be told by well-bred people how to behave like real ladies.) The significance of neither the moss rose nor the Bible is explained in the final revelation of the murderer: they appear in the story only to mislead, which in my submission is not fair play in a crime-thriller.

Any film with Françoise Rosay and Louis Jouvet in it is likely to be memorable for the acting: and a book by Pierre Loti should be worth translating to the screen. I went to *Ramuntcho* with the highest hopes, and for the first part of the picture these were more than realised. But after that the delightful sequences of the Basque smugglers, singing, drinking, outwitting the excisemen, give way to the continued misunderstandings of two of the least appealing young lovers I have met in a French film. Oh, why will *ingénues* trip! Running five steps one way, pausing and then running back, for no apparent reason. And as it galumphs after the heroine, the picture loses all its early quality. E. ARNOT ROBERTSON

Correspondence

HOW TO MEET THE CRISIS

SIR,—In his article on "How to Meet the Crisis" Mr. Douglas Jay states categorically that "activity in the shipbuilding, iron and steel, motor vehicle and many other parts of the engineering industry are at an all-time record level."

Mr. Jay is letting his imagination run away with him. Neither the shipyards, nor the iron and steel works, nor the motor factories are producing at record rates, far from it. Anyone who cares to look up the relative figures can see that for himself. But please do not let anyone be caught out by the weekly and average monthly figures issued by the British Iron and Steel Federation. These people have the habit of fastening on to a temporary high rate, put up for a few weeks, and expanding it to a very favourable yearly rate. As for "many other parts of the engineering industry" some important sections, notably the foundry trade, are working at a lamentably low rate.

And now, please let me make my own categorical claim. I maintain that, given the proper policy and drive, it would be possible to turn out 15-16 million tons of ingot steel in this country, with the existing plant and labour force and without trenching further on overseas raw material.

My reasoning is simple. The effective steelmaking capacity of this country was put at 14,281,000 tons a year, at the end of 1937. Since then the number of open-hearth furnaces has been increased by over 25 per cent, not to mention additional pneumatic converters and electric furnaces. About raw material, we consistently throw away from 2 to 3 millions tons of recoverable scrap every year. DAVID MURRAY

SIR,—The problem of managerial incentive will not be solved without fulfilling certain conditions ignored by Mr. Aidan Crawley in his article "How to Meet the Crisis."

He refers to one—the imposition of a capital gains tax, which, if big enough, will spare efficient managers the harsh irritation of seeing others make far more than they can by unearned increment or anti-social speculation. But there are other considerations. An income under £2,000 a year may be an adequate inducement to manage a large and complex industrial organisation, but, in the long run, only if there prove to be no simpler means of earning it (I rule out the "will to power" motive which is undesirable in management). It is not necessary to leave the country. Plenty of men with small shops and workshops, or working for fees, have real incomes as high as this. Such people often enjoy additional advantages and facilities which go with living on top of their occupations and in small communities. They are, moreover, less vulnerable to an under-staffed Inland Revenue department than the employees of a large concern with accurate book-keeping. It may be that reorganisation of our national life into a pattern of farming and small industry is socially desirable, but this is hardly practical at the moment, and in any case, does not tally with a desire "to re-establish this country as the greatest trading nation in the world."

There is another angle. Assuming an average factory wage for men of £5 a week, Mr. Crawley's highest-paid managers will get eight times as much. It would be interesting to compare this with the corresponding ratio in the U.S.S.R. In any case, the circumstances are vastly different. The Soviet manager, who cannot turn himself into a petty bourgeois even if he wanted to, has no other responsibility than the efficient operation of the plant under his control. His opposite number in England has to cope with the extravagant hazards of competition in an unplanned economy.

First things first. When black-marketeering, tax-dodging and speculation have been eliminated by ruthless measures; when nationalisation is made a reality, covering at least 80 per cent of industry; when economic planning takes the place of acquiescence in chaos, Mr. Crawley's thesis will become valid. Under present conditions, it might turn out to be an expensive economy. H. R. TOMALIN

THE CASE FOR AN R.V.A.

SIR,—Your proposed R.V.A. might, as you pretend, be "the first milestone on the way to a united Europe." That is doubtless why, together with Benelux, it finds favour with Mr. Churchill's "United Europe" Committee. It is not for this reason, however, that I find the proposal unsatisfactory, indeed positively dangerous, but because I ask myself, as every Socialist should surely ask himself, "Is this the first milestone on the way to a *Socialist* Europe?" I suggest to you that it is not; because I find it impossible to regard the T.V.A., for all its excellence, as in any way "Socialist," or to endorse your view that it would be a mere "quarrel about words" to contest the American standpoint that "vast public corporations, owning and controlling the means of production in the service of the community, are *not Socialism*."

I should, therefore, not like to see Mr. Bevin putting forward or endorsing an R.V.A. which the Americans would regard as "a sound business investment" in alleged fulfilment of his pledged word that

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German mining and heavy industry will be "nationalised," by which he meant, presumably, "Socialised." A united Socialist Germany would also provide America with "a sound business investment," in the shape of loans and credits, just as has the Socialist U.S.S.R., and with the added advantage that, as Professor Carr has written of the U.S.S.R., "its social and economic system, offering almost unlimited possibilities of internal development, would hardly be subject to those specific stimuli which dictated expansionist policies to capitalist Britain in the 19th century, and may dictate such policies to the capitalist United States in the 20th." Such a Germany would be an important first milestone on the way, not only to a united Europe, but to a united world.

EDGAR P. YOUNG

WAGES POLICY

SIR,—In his article on wages policy in your issue of July 19th, Mr. Arthur Allen raises some interesting points and makes some peculiar assertions. He rejects extra food, housing, or other inducements, in favour of extra wage rates as the best way of getting labour into under-manned industries. To avoid a general wages increase he proposes a differential profits tax designed to bear most heavily on what he euphemistically terms the "less socially desirable industries," hoping thereby to prevent wages increases in such industries by depriving the employers of the "ready" with which to pay.

As wages are an expenses charge in a business before profits are calculated, surely the level of wages will not be the determinant of the profit level or vice-versa. Only the ratio which wages costs bear to the cost of the finished product will determine the profit margin. In any case, what is a "high" or "low" rate of profit? What are the necessary criteria by which to determine this? It is well known that "low" rates of profit may really be very high if the amount of "water" in the capital is taken into consideration. Must the mass of profit be related to the mass of wages spent in its creation to find the true rate? This last would be dangerous and would lead directly to the Marxian rate of surplus value, something quite different from the rate of profit and something surely not intended by Mr. Allen.

I think your contributor has gone an era ahead of us in history when he asserts "under a Labour Government, labour has gained one of its great aims, it has ceased to be a 'commodity'." As an ordinary member of the Boot and Shoe Operatives Union, could I ask Mr. Allen to come down from the general to the particular and apply his theories to his own industry? First, as in some other industries, the manpower problem in boots and shoes is really a woman-power problem. Pre-war, 80 per cent of the female members of our union were married women; to-day that percentage has fallen to 65. The shortage of women workers can only be remedied by attracting back *married* women who for some reason or another have left the shoe factories. To-day some firms are sending upper materials as far as 150 miles from the parent factory to places where female labour can be found to sew the uppers together. There has also reappeared the dangerous "putting-out" system whereby work is done in the homes of the workers. Would Mr. Allen be opposed to increased personal allowances for married women in industry, to help solve this problem for the shoe (and cotton textile) industry, or would he prefer a straight wages increase even to the point where the wages rate for women might equal or exceed that of the male operatives? If he accepts neither of these proposals what does he propose to solve this problem in our (and other) industries?

Secondly, is the boot and shoe industry one of those industries where it is "imperative that a brake should be applied to wage demands"? As the Union E.C. is at the moment preparing such a demand are they incorrect in so doing, or are they in possession of the scale of values by which one industry is deemed to be more "socially desirable" than another? Is it possible to know the scale?

Kilmarnock. TOM CAMPBELL

THE PRESS AND THE W.F.A.

SIR,—Polycritic's note about the way the W.F.A. received children from Europe stressed the fact that poor accommodation arrangements will leave a bad impression of British hospitality. My impression, based on talks with the children themselves, is that they were quite prepared to forgive us for the accommodation difficulties; the thing that did this country more harm in their eyes than anything else was the way that the British press treated them.

A large group of children, waiting quite happily for foster-parents to be provided for them, were approached by a photographer from a well-known Conservative newspaper. To their amazement he asked them to hang their heads, yawn, and try to give the impression that they were tired and dissatisfied. Not content with that, he tried to persuade one little girl to cry and another to lie down in a mock faint, so that he could give his office pictures of frightened children overcome with fatigue.

The children were absolutely disgusted with the whole business, and complained bitterly. "We never realised things like that happened in England," they said.

The next morning I read an article in the same Tory newspaper. In it the Editor abused the Government roundly for their handling of national affairs; it seems a pity that he does not put his own house in order first.

OBSERVER

PRICES IN EIRE

SIR,—The Note in a recent issue on prices in Eire focuses light on one aspect only. Cost of meat has come down since your correspondent wrote, but in any case all of it is first quality and fresh, while much of the "cheap" meat on the British ration lately has had to be cut away before the minute remains could be cooked. Tinned fruit and vegetables are dearer than in Britain, but they can be freely bought without points. So can all the soft fresh fruits that in Britain are now unobtainable by ordinary citizens. Vegetables, except tomatoes, are cheaper. Sixpence a lb. for first quality peas in pod; eightpence to tenpence for broad beans or haricots. Fresh salmon is 5*s.* a lb. for the best cuts; smoked salmon is plentiful at 6*s.* to 7*s.* New-laid eggs are 3*s.* 6*d.* a dozen.

As to the leg of lamb of which your correspondent writes, who in England except a wielder of eight or ten ration books has seen such a joint in years? And if they did, has not the butcher nearly always warned the buyer that it was fit only for pot roasting or boiling?

Cigarettes, though not plentiful, can be bought at 1*s.* 8*d.* for twenty. Shortage is probably due to the flourishing smuggling trade across the border into Northern Ireland.

IRISH JOURNALIST

REGISTRATION OF CIVIL SERVANTS

SIR,—Your correspondent "Permanent Civil Servant" says that civil servants cannot divest themselves of their status by resigning from their posts; they can only express a wish to do so by tendering their resignations.

In May, 1945, the Government imposed Statutory Regulation 58 A.A. giving departments power to refuse civil servants permission to resign. This Regulation applied to permanent and temporary staffs. The Government justified it on the ground that the resignation of large numbers of civil servants immediately following the end of the war would impede public business. The Regulation has since been withdrawn.

If, as your correspondent suggests, a civil servant cannot voluntarily divest himself of his status, why did the Government, acting on the highest legal advice, deem such a Regulation to be necessary, and why did Parliament approve it?

L. C. WHITE

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Miss Evans's head is a very large one, 22½ inches round: George Combe, on first seeing the cast, took it for a man's. The temperament, nervous lymphatic, that is active without endurance. . . . In her brain development the Intellect greatly predominates; it is very large, more in length than in its peripheral surface. In the Feelings, the Animal and the Moral regions are about equal; the moral being quite sufficient to keep the animal in order and in due subservience, but would not be spontaneously active. The social feelings were very active, particularly the adhesiveness. She was of a most affectionate disposition, always requiring some one to lean upon, preferring what has hitherto been considered the stronger sex, to the other and more impressible. She was not fitted to stand alone.

THERE could hardly be a better statement of the framework of George Eliot's character than this peculiar report on her bumps; and Mr. Gerald Bullett, in whose new *Life** the passage appears, returns to it often (especially to the adhesiveness) with discreet relish. He does not mention the malicious story that she had her hair shaved off in the interests of the new science; but he is not averse from the amusement which George Eliot has aroused in her detractors. (There was Samuel Butler, for example, who spoke of buying a dictionary in order to read *Daniel Deronda* in the original.) Mr. Bullett's contribution is that she often had the sadness, not of an undue sense of sin, but of an ill-cooked cake. The melancholy and powerful lady did indeed suffer from a dyspepsia as chronic as Carlyle's. But, having made his joke or two, Mr. Bullett, like the rest of us, is awed. He repents and swings towards a sympathy so (shall we say?) adhesive that George Eliot ceases to be a Victorian in his portrait and the force behind the ambiguities of her character ebbs away. If we accepted Mr. Bullett's view—and it is agreeably and nicely presented—we should have to conclude that the great Conscience, the great Worry among the English novelists, had really nothing to worry about. One has only to read her novels to see that both she and her enthusiastic readers thought she had. In his enlightened modern way Mr. Bullett rebukes her determinism—but where would her tragic power have been without it?—and reduces the mountains in this stubborn, affectionate and despondent lady's conscience to the size of molehills. When they cannot be reduced, he agrees with most other critics that she suffered from an exorbitance of intellect; she had read and reviewed too much.

And yet, in her work, is not that heaviness the imprint of the dull, slow Warwickshire days of her childhood which have given her novels their clear and homely solemnity? And after her Calvinistic history, did not her life seek situations which would at once justify and defy Calvinism? Many critics have suspected that George Eliot, despite her happiness and perhaps because of it, felt a life-long guilt in her relation with Lewes, and Mr. Bullett thinks they are wrong. Why should she? he asks. The answer must be that rationalists are not always rational. The work of a novelist is an excellent pointer to unconscious sources, and George Eliot's novels abound in evidence of guilt. It is true that the guilt theory is not enough in itself; it is applicable only when the ambivalence of her character is noted, that double-mindedness which she herself spoke of and which is always nagging and solacing the puritan head. Hetty Sorrel was punished because George Eliot was not; Gwendolen Herleth in *Daniel Deronda* is punished for being rich because George Eliot herself is rich without punishment. That these imaginary punishments are realised in the false and melodramatic scenes of her novels indicates how unreliable a guide her conscience was, and how perverse. (The present-day obsession with guilt as a subject seems to me as factitious as it was in George Eliot.) The fact is that there is a perpetual comedy of hypocrisy in the puritan mind, a mind so worldly, an imagination so frightened, having a power of sublimation so presumptuous and self-deceiving; and this was the comedy played out in George Eliot's life and nature. When we think of Lewes and George Eliot, the reformed libertine and the emancipated prig who had (in an intellectual way) annoyed many sharp-eyed women by being such "a one" for clever men, we do not marvel at their happiness, but we do wonder what they confided to each other. What occasions for unspontaneous moral speculation there must have been—for we cannot imagine these two to have been free of jealousy—what peculiar exchanges of experience! Her marriage to Lewes is better comedy than the marriage of the Carlyles, for it distils no bitterness; and it is none the less a comedy, because some of the greatest novels of the 19th century came out of it.

But let us turn from the life—it was not a very interesting one—to one of the novels. *Daniel Deronda:* the best and worst of George Eliot, as Mr. Bullett says, are here, and the worst is as suggestive as the best is entrancing. Her social observation has the grim gleam of the female eye and the iron of the female tongue; the plainness of the satire, its homely shrewdness—"as well turn the key to keep out the damp"—are English even in their lumpishness, and convince us that locality and common experience are always squarely before her eyes. Henry Adams complained in his autobiography of the evasions of English eccentricity: there is none in George Eliot. She evades very little. She would rather be flat than fantastic. An intellectual, she has a comic perception of moral types who, in other novelists, could have been fantastics: the happy Sir Hugo with his interest in what, with characteristic euphemism, he calls "*mœurs*" and whose "energies have been quietly spent in feeling gratified." How his wife completes, briefly but perfectly, the picture of a man and a marriage. She regrets:

> Her failure as a wife—the not having presented Sir Hugo with a son. Her constant reflection was that her husband might fairly regret his choice, and if he had not been very good might have treated her with some roughness in consequence, gentlemen naturally disliking to be disappointed.

Or there is Bult, the expectant political peer, "rather neutral in private life," with the "general solidity and suffusive pinkness of a healthy Briton on the central tableland of life," not surprised by the political opinions of foreigners, but "genuinely overcome when they spoke English well." The worldliness of George Eliot assures us, later, of the soundness of her finer and more spacious insights. In this worldly framework we are prepared to consider the high spiritual drama of Gwendolen's marriage with Grandcourt and at least to give a trial to her flights about Deronda and the Jews, so cunningly have small examples prepared us for great issues. Like the Continental novelists, she legislates; and, alone in her own time, she is able to draw the gradual moral change of character, so that her people age or harden or soften before our eyes. Between Gwendolen and Grandcourt we see not love but the struggle for power between the sexes; both are gamblers throwing against each other. No one has been better aware than George Eliot of the spiritual projections of passion or of its tragic strategy; of what a passion adds to the moral powers and where it wears them down until they are the mere counters on the social gaming table. Dorothea Casaubon was a prig; Gwendolen is the opposite; they are both within the range of this impressive mind. Grandcourt is a great and original villain, redeemed from fantasy by the lethargy of his tastes and his comfort in his own habits. The scenes when Grandcourt and Lush, his yes-man, are together in desultory rudeness, quietly annoying each other, like a man and his dog, are admirable. It is the feminine streak in Grandcourt that has suited him to George Eliot's pen; the Victorians missed that and found him incredible. George Eliot is an expert in the tergiversations of conscience, and the snares of rationalisation, and no one equals her in showing precisely how people come to do what they do not intend: Grandcourt's proposal is one of the great proposal scenes in the Victorian novel. The analysis of Gwendolen's motives, though often written in terms of right and wrong and further moralised upon, grinds very fine; and those who complain of the perpetual raising of the moral issue, must remember that Gwendolen is a Victorian, that worry is still the native English method of analysis, conduct still our instinctive preoccupation. Questions of right and wrong cut paths into the overgrown humane land, that are just as searching as those reputed to be more disinterested, intellectual, aesthetic or scientific. We are reminded, too, when Gwendolen hesitates to marry Grandcourt after meeting his mistress, how strangely the modern novelist has come to repress the moral sense of his characters. We may feel that George Eliot repressed the evident jealousy of her favoured people; she did; perhaps she generated ethics for practical reasons in order to keep jealousy down in her own adhesive life and in her characters; yet we cannot but respond, as to the last fluttering of an almost atrophied sense, when Gwendolen asks, "Am I right?"

The Jewish theme, the portrait of Daniel Deronda, the insipid Mirah and the fabricated figure of Mordecai, are, as everyone has said, an utter, dreary, unreadable failure. The whole ham repertory of melodrama and coincidence comes thumping in with these sawdust puppets. But the choice of the theme marks the establishment of that disgust with the vulgarities of anti-Semitism which has become permanent among English intellectuals; and it is notable that George Eliot is the first English novelist not to find foreigners automatically funny or the Continent a place of sin. She is an educated woman. Deronda is boring unless we regard him as a transposed piece of self-portraiture. He is one of those unfortunates, in her novels, who, as Mr. Bullett nicely says, suffer from her unqualified approval. Humourless, vacillating, fatherless, he appears also to be an acute foretelling of the tendency of rationalism to feel the lack of a primitive impulse and to tend towards mysticism—a national mysticism, too. Farseeing of her, but, like most of the Victorians, she saw no dangers in nationalism.

In the scene where Deronda meets his mother, the hardened artist who has accepted illness and the decline of her powers, the Jewish mother utters her one hesitation about her abandoned faith. Her father had held it; he would not have forgiven the apostasy. She will always feel, against all reason, that fear, that awe of the father. This scene must have come out of George Eliot's soul; it convinces one of her integrity. Clearly she was a woman who, thank heaven, "got over" nothing. We are convinced that her introspective mind kept real issues, as well as illusory ones, alive. We cannot suppose that in being happy, successful and rich, she easily abandoned any of the female Victorians' taste for a splitting headache. And to have Lewes there, the reformed Don Juan, offering the uxorious bottle of eau de cologne must have given to worry the voluptuousness and the provocation so stimulating to the Puritan artist.

V. S. PRITCHETT

* *George Eliot.* By GERALD BULLETT. (*Collins.* 12*s* 6*d*.)

NEW SHORT STORIES

Nineteen Stories. By GRAHAM GREENE. *Heinemann.* 8*s*. 6*d*.

Innocents. By A. L. BARKER. *Hogarth Press.* 7*s*. 6*d*.

First Love and Other Stories. By VIOLA MEYNELL. *Cape.* 9*s*.

Survivors. By JOHN SOMMERFIELD. *Lehmann.* 8*s*. 6*d*.

English Story. Edited by WOODROW WYATT. *Collins.* 8*s*. 6*d*.

Sad Road to the Sea. By GERALD KERSH. *Heinemann.* 8*s*. 6*d*.

"Whenever I meet that phrase, 'art of the short story,'" said Arnold Bennett, "I feel as if I had drunk mustard and water." Since it

was 1909, he hadn't been reading the lesser English and American little magazines; it wasn't de-hydrated Katherine Mansfield re-constituted with too much water or slices of tinned spiced Hemingway or chopped Saroyan that he found emetic. He was simply angry with the current cant, that "the short story is mysteriously somehow more difficult than the long story—the novel." "Ask," he urged the readers of *The New Age*, "ask Thomas Hardy, ask George Meredith, ask Joseph Conrad, ask H. G. Wells, ask Murray Gilchrist, ask George Moore, ask Eden Philpotts, ask 'Q,' ask Henry James." And, for the sake of the record, we may add: "Ask Joyce, Lawrence, Huxley. Ask Miss Bowen." "It is of a piece," he concluded, "with the notion that a fine sonnet is more difficult than a fine epic."

He is, of course, right; a good short story is not more difficult to write than a good novel. But in so far as the two forms can be compared it is not less difficult to write; and to expect a good novelist to write good short stories simply because he is a good novelist is as absurd as to expect a champion miler to run the hundred yards in under ten seconds.

It is for this reason, one imagines, that Mr. Graham Greene prefaces his *Nineteen Stories* with the remark: "I am only too conscious of the defects of these stories, written at long intervals between 1929 and 1941. The short story is an exacting form which I have never properly practised: I present these tales merely as the by-products of a novelist's career." Everyone interested in Mr. Greene's work will need to read these stories. They are exciting precisely because they are by Mr. Greene; no one else could have written them; they belong to the same world as his novels and travel books.

> A kind of embittered happiness and self-pity made him cry; he was lost; there wouldn't be any more secrets to keep; he surrendered responsibility once and for all. Let grown-up people keep to their world and he would keep to his, safe in the small garden between the plane-trees. "In the lost childhood of Judas Christ was betrayed"; you could almost see the small unformed face hardening into the deep dilettante selfishness of age.

The passage is from one of the best of these stories, "The Basement Room," in which a small boy left by his parents in the care of the butler and his wife sees his friend the butler commit murder: he is doomed to grow up into a character in one of Mr. Greene's novels. And that is the point: one story excepted, "The End of The Party," which does exist triumphantly in its own right, without reference to his other work, it seems to me impossible to see these stories other than as appendages to Mr. Greene's novels. The collection includes the beginnings of an unfinished and now never-to-be-finished novel, "The Other Side of the Border." Written after the author's return from Liberia in 1936; it is of course enormously interesting; but what is of special moment is that one reads it in just the same way as one does the stories in the collection: with an excitement that is not, I think, aesthetic, but results from the light they throw on Mr. Greene's mind and work. What is lacking to them, good as they are, is immediately apparent when one thinks of the stories of a fine novelist who is also a born short story writer, like Miss Elizabeth Bowen. It is a matter of tempo, of rhythm, of the way in which character is created, for the short story writer's way is not the novelist's; and ultimately one's criticism is that the characters in most of the *Nineteen Stories* could be transplanted as they stand to become minor characters in Mr. Greene's novels. It is at once their interest and their weakness.

Miss A. L. Barker is, it seems to me, a born short story writer. She describes her eight stories as "variations on a theme," the theme being, I take it, the impact of experience upon innocence. Her characters, then, tend mainly to be children or half-wits. She writes excellently, with an observation at once fresh and exact ("a sloping brown field, stitched all over with green,") and she has a true insight into human relations. Thus she describes the feelings of a boy towards his schoolmaster:

> Gilby had never done anything to rouse the boy's hostility, for Richard conceded him the right to approve or condemn his school work and was indifferent to either opinion. It was something of the grave unlucky clown, something limp and poor, a contagious failure in Gilby, which inflamed Richard. He would have preferred brutality, which was virile, or a cheap asperity which was mischievous, anything rather than this sad, sedulous defeat. It was ignominious, it aroused his spite.

Writing though she is of children and half-wits, the professional innocents as it were, she is utterly unsentimental; and it is not always her children who are the innocents: in the title story, for example, it is the boy who is the knowing agent of destruction, the not-so-young spinster who represents innocence. The best of a most impressive collection is the story "Submerged," which has a theme similar to Mr. Greene's "The Basement Room": a boy whose favourite sport is swimming through the narrow arch made by the submerged roots of a tree witnesses what "adult fallibility" later decides is murder and finds the woman's body wedged between the roots:

> . . . It was not his affair and there was no part which he would wish to claim as his.
>
> The lid was replaced and it was almost as if there had never been any river. Whistling, he wheeled his bicycle into the road. He was going to swim in the quarry.

Miss Meynell, a more mannered writer than Miss Barker, writes from a narrower angle of vision, with a malice which must, I suppose, be called feminine, though many male writers would be the better for its possession. She is especially good at demonstrating the cruelties practised by the comfortable and the secure upon the defenceless and unprotected. A characteristic story is "We Were Just Saying," in which a middle-aged middle-class woman, to the horror and pain of her young daughter, insists on discussing the insufficiencies of a deaf relation in the unfortunate woman's presence:

> ". . . This that I'm going to tell you is only one little detail of all the trying things I've had to endure from her for a year. In all my efforts to make her hear I've sometimes shouted myself ill, almost, and she's drawn back as if I'd hurt her, and said I didn't need to shout so loud. So I've not only not had to speak too low, but not too loud either. I've been supposed to know exactly the pitch of voice required. You'd think that to be spoken to at all they'd take as a favour. That's only one little thing; I do assure you that altogether it's been a martyrdom."

I preferred Miss Meynell's very short stories to her longer ones, but like Miss Barker she has constant powers of invention, so that her stories are always unexpected in their implications, and she writes with subtlety and wit: "As so often happens, the elder sister was smaller and less regular-featured than the younger—as if their mother had been able to do better the second time what she was strange to at first."

In magazines Mr. Sommerfield's stories have often given me pleasure, but I found the contents of *The Survivors* insufficiently varied in incident and tone. Most of the stories deal with life in the R.A.F. during the war in England, the desert and Burma. The title of the first, "Worm's-Eye View," indicates the angle from which Mr. Sommerfield observes the war; he writes as an aircraftman, and for the most part his stories are a record of frustration and petty persecution endured in the most depressing climatic conditions. I thought his characters, Lofty, Slush, Curly, Harry the Dripper, as stereotyped as their names. Where he excels is in description of landscapes and places; the story "A Few Short Notes from the Desert," (if what has neither characters nor incidents can be called a story), is beautifully and movingly written. But in the main his stories suffer from the limitations common to apparently literal transcripts from actuality; their value is almost entirely documentary. Which is something, but not enough.

One-third of the current edition of *English Story* consists of Mr. Stephen Spender's "The Fool and the Princess." Like Lawrence, Mr. Spender has no concern for form or selection of detail; words are flung on to paper raw and bleeding from the assault of experience upon an intense, uninhibited sensibility. It is a way of writing which is often impressive, as in much of Lawrence's work and in some of Mr. Spender's poetry. It can result in natural, organic form, or simply in chaos. In this story of an Englishman in the Control Commission in Germany who falls in love with a displaced person, a love which complements the love he has for his wife, it results in chaos. Told much more concentratedly, at a quarter of the length, "The Fool and the Princess" might have been a moving story. As it is, it embarrasses.

For the rest, *English Story* contains an admirable story by Mr. James Hanley and good characteristic work by Mr. Beachcroft, Mr. Sid Chaplin and Mr. Cledwyn Hughes. Mr. Sansom's story in the first person, in which he retreats from Kafka and symbolism and essays a plain narration, disappoints. Mr. Maclaren-Ross could have made it funny. "A characteristic story based on an anxiety neurosis," the blurb calls it; it's as uncharacteristic as it could be, and if what it celebrates is an anxiety neurosis then anxiety neuroses are ten a penny.

Mr. Kersh is at his tricks again. With false starts and snap endings he jazzes up pre-history ("He was only a caricature of a man, walking cautiously on short legs which were as thick and uncouth as tree-stumps"), tells us Bible stories that we never heard before ("'Simon Iscariot, accept my congratulations,' said the dealer in perfumes"), eulogises courage ("So that's what a man gets by playing the man—not a rotten blinking medal, but the spirit that is fit to hand on!"), sheds tough tears over murderers who become great composers while serving life sentences ("I'm told it's great music. That may or may not be so. The thing that sticks in my mind is the picture of that man, hitting—with all that fire and that passion—the keyboard that made no sounds"), surveys England in the centuries to come after the atomic bomb has wiped out London ("A chieftain of the Savages of the Central Belt warned me not to go to The Bad Place"). He has been compared with Kipling, but his mechanical stories bear the same relation to Kipling's as Birmingham "oriental" ware does to the genuine article. It wouldn't matter if it weren't that once upon a time Mr. Kersh could write. But, as they say in Birmingham, he knows his own say-so best.

WALTER ALLEN

THE SEA WOLF

Lord Cochrane. By CHRISTOPHER LLOYD. *Longman.* 15s.

Lord Cochrane, as exhibited in the novels of Captain Marryat and Henty, has been a schoolboy's hero for more than a hundred years. His courage in battle, his practical seamanship and his inventive genius are nicely calculated to fulfil the daydreams of any young male adolescent. But it is a pity that these novelists, by concentrating on their hero's prowess at sea, neglected the chance to draw a moral for the young from his misfortunes on land. For Cochrane blighted his career in the British Navy by writing a "stinker." There are moments when the unfairness, neglect, or even crass stupidity of others reaches such a pitch and so preys upon the mind, especially the young mind, that the writing of such a "stinker" seems the only possible way to relieve oneself of this sense of ill-usage. In such circumstances always write one—but never post it. These letters are always addressed to persons who have power, and are accused of misusing that power. The recipient, if he is in the right, will despise and laugh at you. But if he is in the wrong, he will never forgive you. Either way, you may be sure that his power in future will never be exercised to your advantage. So, when Cochrane, a fiery, red-haired young Scot of 25,

dispatched his "stinker" to the First Lord of the Admiralty, "Old Jarvie" took a lingering revenge. Thenceforward Cochrane's name in the Navy List stood damned for insubordination. The "stinker" was written in 1801: half a century later, during the Crimean War, the Admiralty was still muttering "An unreliable fellow."

Mr. Lloyd's short biography gives an admirably clear and impartial account of the remarkable vicissitudes in the life of this roving sea-captain. *Le loup des mers*, Napoleon called Cochrane, from his deplorable habit of snatching fat French ships out of well-guarded harbours. Indeed, Cochrane's cutting-out expeditions furnish text-book illustrations of how to practise the art of war. His tactics were simple but infallible—surprise. An enemy surprised is an enemy already half-defeated; and all Cochrane's ingenuity was employed to see that his enemies never had a chance to recover their equanimity before the battle was over. His own character in action was a blend of illimitable self-confidence and canny Scottish wariness. The position was always thoroughly reconnoitred beforehand to make sure that for himself there should be no awkward surprises. Now these tactics are essentially a one-man method of making war; they call for leadership, but not team work. In the battle of Aix Roads—an inconclusive victory barely recorded in our history books—Cochrane surpassed himself; yet the French fleet escaped. At 8 p.m. on the night of April 11th, 1809, eleven French battleships and three frigates were safely at anchor in the mouth of the River Charente, protected by a heavy boom and two land forts. Twelve hours later only two of the French ships were afloat. Cochrane, by the use of fireships (almost obsolete since the days of the Armada) and an "explosion vessel" of his own invention, had driven the rest helplessly ashore. It was a triumph of surprise—but, unfortunately, not only for the French. The British Admiral was so astounded that he could not believe his own eyes; and he refused to send in the fleet to complete the enemy's destruction. And Cochrane, too, was surprised—that his superior officers had not the same implicit confidence in him as his subordinates had. In the end, Lord Gambier, the Admiral, received the thanks of Parliament for the victory; and Cochrane was left to nurse another grievance.

Mr. Lloyd has an interesting chapter on Cochrane's strange appearance in Parliament as a Radical Reformer; and he enters in great detail into the rights and wrongs of the criminal prosecutions which ended this political career. Cochrane was convicted of a fraud on the Stock Exchange and sentenced to a year's imprisonment; but he hotly denied his guilt. The evidence against him was purely circumstantial; some of the witnesses were afterwards convicted of perjury; Lord Ellenborough, who tried the case, was an unbridled old Tory; and his counsel admittedly bungled the defence. Eighteen years later, indeed, Cochrane was granted a free pardon; but that is not the same thing as a reversal of the verdict. Was he, in fact, guilty? It is a weakness of the non-partisan school of biography (of which Mr. Lloyd is a most creditable member) that it hesitates to pronounce effective judgment. "Personally, I believe he was innocent," says Mr. Lloyd; and then goes on to qualify even such a mild exhibition of bias by stating: "Even if we grant that he was in some sense guilty, we cannot agree that he deserved the savage sentence." I strongly recommend Mr. Lloyd's book to every student of human character. And I should be much surprised if the verdict now went against Cochrane. He may easily have been unscrupulous and avaricious enough to organise a cutting-out expedition against the money-grubbers in the City by means of an ingenious practical joke. For that is what the crime amounted to. But he would certainly have been the *leader* of the gang, and not a minor accomplice, as evidenced by the Crown. And if he had been guilty, he would certainly not have been *dumbfounded* by the verdict of the jury; but have arranged a successful getaway, as did the ringleaders of the plot.

No life of Cochrane would be complete without a chapter on the famous Secret Plan, which he disclosed to the Prince Regent in 1812 in order to conquer Napoleon, and again submitted to the Admiralty in 1855 to assure the defeat of Russia. The Plan was so terrible that it could never be used and never revealed. To the popular mind once a mystery, always a mystery. No matter how often Joanna Southcott's box may be opened, whatever else may emerge, the truth will never leak out. By the publication of the Panmure Papers in 1908 the Plan actually was revealed to the public. Yet in 1914 Cochrane's grandson was so ignorant of this fact that he offered the Plan to Lord Kitchener; and in 1939 a leading newspaper proposed that the Plan should be employed to counter Hitler's secret weapons. The Plan is just what one might expect from Cochrane's fertile imagination—the use of poison-gas as a surprise. Only, Cochrane proposed sulphur fumes, which are noxious and incapacitating but not lethal. When the Duke of Wellington had studied the Plan, he dismissed it with: "Two can play at that game." And two did, from 1915 to 1918—and a very nasty game it was.

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ARABIA FELIX

Aden to the Hadhramaut. By D. VAN DER MEULEN. *John Murray.* 18s.

Saudi Arabia. By K. S. TWITCHELL. *Princeton University Press and Geoffrey Cumberlege.* 14s.

The existence of such standard works on Southern Arabia as those of Freya Stark, Harold Ingrams, and H. St. John Philby, would seem to place Mr. van der Meulen's *Aden to the Hadhramaut* at an initial disadvantage, but in the first few pages any misgivings are quickly dispelled. This is his second book on a fascinating region; the first, *Hadhramaut; Some of its Mysteries Unveiled*, was produced in 1932 after an abortive effort to make an overland crossing from Mukalla to Aden, an attempt which failed because the country was distracted by tribal warfare. At that time Great Britain, as the protecting Power, had made no serious drive to extend the Pax Britannica into the hinterland.

Seven years later, in company with Professor von Wissmann, the cartographer, the author made a second, and this time successful, attempt, penetrated tribal territory off the track of other author-explorers, and completed his journey from Aden via Shuqra and the Talh Pass, through Wadi Hadhramaut to Mukalla. By 1939 the *Sulh* Ingrams, Ingrams' Peace, had left its impression on even the most refractory tribes

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and apart from slight bickerings here and there the journey was peacefully accomplished. In these more stable conditions the original conception of the work was developed and it contains acknowledgments that the general prosperity of the country has increased beyond measure in the years between, although there is some criticism of the more forceful means which were adopted to bring about this change.

Mr. van der Meulen has been employed in official capacities by the Dutch Government for over thirty years in the East, partly in the Netherlands East Indies, partly in Arabia; not unnaturally he is inclined to stress the economic and cultural links between Southern Arabia and Java and Malaya. For many years there has been a flow of Hadhramis back and forth to the East Indies, many of them returning, extremely rich, to spend their declining years in their native Wadis: in their homes and in their agricultural projects the author sees "the bounties of Java which have lifted the Hadhramaut out of decay."

As a traveller the author misses nothing. The authentic atmosphere of the desert is there, its incomparable sunsets glow, and the native towns and villages shimmer in the morning haze. Native architecture and archaeology are sympathetically treated, and there are interesting ethnological notes. There is a touching glimpse of the life and state of the colonies of Jews which have existed in Southern Arabia since the Diaspora. The 92 photographs are good and relevant and the style throughout is sensitive and at times quietly and objectively humorous.

In one respect only is it possible to criticise and in the circumstances criticism would be unfair. The book was compiled immediately before the war, and the hopes and fears of the author are those of the well-informed person of 1939. We are now beginning to be able to reverse the telescope on the events of that year and the subsequent years, and, viewed in perspective, some of the observations have a spectral sound. Without attempting to produce a book which is deeply and critically erudite, Mr. van der Meulen has none the less made a weighty contribution to contemporary understanding of Southern Arabia.

Mr. K. S. Twitchell is an American mining engineer with a wide and varied experience of Saudi Arabia. His book is a collection of information and impressions in the compilation of which he has had the assistance and advice of several prominent American orientalists and has enjoyed the collaboration of Dr. Edward Jurji of Princeton University. The result is a compact little book containing a vast amount of well arranged and classified information which, as long as it sticks to geological and geographical-economic data, is quite unexceptionable. Unfortunately the historical and political sections, necessarily brief, are also stereotyped. Not direct reporting, they are unimpressive despite their accuracy. The general effect is nevertheless quite pleasing, like that of browsing through a competently produced handbook. JOHN COOKSON

VICTORY CAMPAIGN

Victory Campaign May 1944-August 1945. By STRATEGICUS. *Faber and Faber.* 12s. 6d.

This work is the eighth and last one of a series dealing with the military events of the war. It is a report rather than a narrative, but since even in this more modest form it remains difficult to explain involved and entangled facts, it seems that Strategicus has achieved his purpose. The nineteen chapters of the book follow on so happily that, while keeping in perfect chronological order, he takes his reader from Italy, Normandy, Russia and the Balkans to the Pacific Ocean and to Burma, always remaining clear and intelligible. Under such guidance the author expounds the succession of battles and manoeuvres, starting from the offensive in May 1944 to the capitulation of Japan. The plot is good, the style is pleasant. Even a foreigner is able to appreciate the ease and clearness of this book, and I admit that, once having started, I couldn't put it aside.

Strategicus takes care to stress, in passing, the relative importance of the various campaigns on the different fronts and their repercussion on each other. He takes care to avoid showy illustrations, over-simple explanations and sensational revelations, and his secret preference for the Italian campaign and his admiration for General Alexander do not prevent him from giving an unbiased picture. No doubt a book of this kind cannot rise beyond its scope. The geographical indications of the countries covered by the movements of these armies are precise, but a description of a quarter of this planet cannot be expected from him. In this exposition of operations references to problems of military technique are short. But regarding the landing in Normandy, for example, he is alluding to battles between bombers and fighters, the quality of the tanks, and the German gun number 88. Perhaps he might have been more explicit about the collapse of the Atlantic Wall. Was the fact that the defending artillery had been neutralised so quickly due to the weakness of the anti-aircraft defence, or to the state of the fortifications or to any other cause? The question deserves to be put. It is true that Strategicus did not intend to develop a theory of combat and neither did he analyse the great offensive operations in the Russian and Polish plains.

But this work becomes particularly controversial when the author ceases to be reporter and becomes historian, that is when he passes judgment on the political conduct of the war. Strategicus is frigid in regard to the Americans, bitter towards the French and openly hostile towards the Russians. No doubt he has plenty of praise for the Russian soldiers and generals, but when it comes to Communism he certainly sees red. The Warsaw rebellion, for example, inspires him with the most bitter comments. While his sincere appreciation of the operations of the French in Italy and of the F.F.I. is of far greater value than many other enthusiastic notes, he devotes nine and a half lines to a cutting criticism of General de Gaulle's politics. His attitude towards the Americans is acid, he says of Eisenhower: "He was no Napoleon, but very far from a cipher" (page 253). No doubt the affair of the German counter-offensive in the Ardennes at the end of 1944 raises controversies which might taint certain reputations.

Nobody outside Great Britain would refute the compliments which Strategicus pays to numerous British generals who have proved to be great men, or his adulatory appreciation of Montgomery and Churchill. But they need not be elevated at the expense of their partners. Perhaps it should be said that Hitler and his three victors—Stalin, Churchill and Roosevelt—deserve an analysis of their characters a little longer than half a page for each.

I am more ready to agree with Strategicus in his judgment of the conduct of the war by the Germans. He admires their soldiers in spite of the horror inspired by their politicians, and he shows up the mistakes of their leaders. It was a mistake not to attack England after Dunkirk, not to stake everything on the Russian campaign in 1941, a mistake to declare war on the United States. While I do not see what the Germans would have gained from invading Spain, Portugal and Morocco in 1940, should one not condemn the insufficient support given to Rommel's campaign in Egypt? The indecision and the lack of co-ordination of the German leaders, their

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extremely ambitious aims and the timidity in their execution, lead one to agree with the verdict of the author, which is *felo de se*. This does not invalidate Napoleon's famous *mot* that miracles in war always happen to those who have the largest battalions. The Germans missed their chance when they were at their strongest. The Allies did not make this mistake when they gained supremacy.

One more remark, more down to earth to finish up with, and this is not directed against the author. If, in a work which contains innumerable names, it is pardonable to play havoc with the accents on the "e" in French as far as villages are concerned, could not more attention be paid to well-known places and persons like Herriot, Ponte Vecchio, Sabaudia? Besides, I would like to remind Strategicus that when he speaks of the "German road to Canossa," this matter concerns the Pope least of all.

But these small criticisms do not alter the fact that the book as a whole is very admirable indeed.

THE MILITARY CRITIC OF *La France Libre*

A PLEA FOR THE WORLD STATE

The Anatomy of Peace. By EMERY REVES. *Penguin Books.* 1s.

Mr. Reves's book has, since its appearance in the United States in 1945, sold in hundreds of thousands in that country; thousands of study groups have been formed specifically to discuss its ideas, and all platforms of modern publicity, including the pulpits of liberal Churches, have echoed its phrases and chapters. It has certainly literary merits (and limitations) which partly account for its success. In treating present world affairs in a light, slovenly, loquacious but not unintelligent style, the author makes some interesting observations—for instance, on the different ways in which different nations have interpreted the same international events; and digs out, from time to time, strikingly curious utterances by statesmen whose teachings are supposed to be universally known. More decisive in his success is his faculty of both seeing and ignoring the obvious to a quite extraordinary extent. The obvious truth which has been broached by practically all enlightened political writers but never, so far as I know, expounded so decidedly and emphatically as in *The Anatomy of Peace*, is that no international arrangement short of a World State has even a chance to prevent the third World War, or for that matter the fourth and fifth. Not that the rulers, whether Socialist or capitalist, totalitarian or democratic, want war. It will happen whether they want it or not, and irrespective of their ideologies or economic systems. "It is," he says,

> "the inevitable conflict between non-integrated sovereignties in contact. We could put a Communist in the White House or establish the purest Jeffersonian democracy in Russia and the situation would be the same. Unless an over-all world government organisation can be established in time by persuasion and consent, no diplomatic magic will prevent the explosion."

The question, then, is how to establish such an organisation. Mr. Reves definitely rejects the idea of the United Nations as worthless, even as a "first step," because it is based on "us the States" and not on "us the people." In the meantime, he argues that no national or other state community should impose its own ideas on the other before all have come together in the Parliament of the World State. But, again, on what basis should they come together? Should they elect their representatives according to, say, the U.S.A. methods? This would certainly mean imposing ideas from outside on the U.S.S.R., which believes that the expression of a nation's will cannot be genuine so long as it is determined by the capitalist interests which control the platforms of public opinion. Or should the U.S.A. be asked to accept the methods of Soviet representation as democratic?

This is one of the obvious questions which Mr. Reves fails to answer or even to ask. He may try to solve it by suggesting that all countries should elect their representatives according to their own conception of democracy: the Russians should send their Soviet representatives, and the Americans their Republican and Democrat deputies into the World Legislative Assembly. But this is just the thing which causes the United Nations, as it caused the League, to act as a meeting place of the States instead of a State of all peoples.

PAUL IGNOTUS

British Trade Unions. By N. BAROU. *Gollancz.* 6s.

Trade unionism, like Local Government, is a subject to which only the specialist is easily attracted. Both are matters which the Webbs and, later, Professor Cole have made their special concern, realising how vital they are to an efficient and increasingly socialised economy. Dr. Barou, who has spent much time and effort in preparing this book, deserves the widest possible audience. He is chiefly concerned with the part trade unions are to play in the years of transition to a Socialist economy and, after a careful examination of the past development and present structure of British trade unions, he concludes that considerable structural changes are required if they are to operate with the greatest efficiency. Neither the union leaders nor the rank-and-file have so far shown much desire to make these changes, which require primarily a great adjustment of their traditional defensive psychology. They have to be convinced that the threat of mass long-term unemployment has really gone before they will willingly abandon cherished restrictive practices and take up the new task of assuming the responsibility for production in a Socialist society. This, indeed, is one of the key problems raised by the advent of the Labour Government and one to which no satisfactory answer has yet been offered either by the Government or by the unions themselves. Dr. Barou is able to show that over a fair period the unions have gradually been adapting themselves to new conditions—the decline of the official strike is one instance—but he points out that the rate of change is far too slow and that its direction is insufficiently clear or appreciated.

This is a valuable book, especially for those in responsible political or trade union positions, for it provides the basic data upon which the new position of trade unions has to be debated, and, in some way, worked out. It is a detailed survey of union organisation—supplemented by very useful statistical appendices—which is entitled to become a standard reference book. Dr. Barou does not pretend to answer the questions he raises, but he at least raises the right questions. The Labour Movement ignores them at its peril, for they challenge some of its most precious and fundamental assumptions.

Henry V and the Invasion of France. E. F. JACOB. *English Universities Press.* 5s.

This book is one of a series of introductory works using the lives of outstanding historical figures as a means of approach to particular periods or problems. The value of the method is not apparent in every case, and it imposes certain restraints on the writer, but within these limitations Dr. Jacob has written an admirable sketch of a difficult but well-defined period. The title states the main theme, Henry's attempt to revive the hegemony of an Anglo-French empire, a ghost of the twelfth-century Angevin supremacy over North-west Europe and the Atlantic seaboard. But there is much more than this in the book; there are all the other threads of policy, domestic and foreign, all the bravery and squalor of the later Middle Ages, all the variety of an age living on the ideals of a dead chivalry, and on the hopes of an adolescent

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nationalism. The treatment of such facets of the subject shows an equal sureness and command of material; in spite of serious limitations of space, and therefore of opportunities for detailed discussion, Dr. Jacob's judgments are never slight or ill-considered.

There is one minor feature which may irritate some readers. The series is planned to appeal to the layman, and as a result of this every historical pill is heavily sugared. In this book the bait takes the form of a number of strained and rarely convincing parallels between political and military events in fifteenth-century and contemporary Europe. But this is only a minor blemish in a very good introduction to a period for which popular introductions have been few and inadequate.

Week-end Competitions

No. 911

Set by Raymond Mortimer

Six guineas are offered for the best non-libellous clerihews on any living writers for the Press. Entries by Aug. 19.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 908

Set by Allan M. Laing

N inety-and-one and still so much alive!
I s Heaven not worried that you don't arrive?
N eeds God above no guide intelligent
E arth's economic problems to present?
T he gravelled imps of Hell: could they not use
Y our playwright's cunning to confound, confuse?

O r do you stay with us because of those
N on-sensitive behinds that need your toes?
E arth wants to keep you, but would like your views.

Mr. Shaw is ninety-one next week. I invite competitors to follow my example and to write an acrostic on any other living writer who may reach the same advanced age.

Report by Allan M. Laing

Not a large entry, but over half was of a high standard. Most competitors strung their lines on the letters Ninety-One, though this was not explicit in the competition terms. Twenty-six subject names figured in the entries, my own (embarrassingly enough) heading the list with six, followed by Somerset Maugham, Agatha Christie, Walter de la Mare, Noel Coward, J. B. Priestley, Robert Hichens, E. M. Forster, etc. A few competitors not satisfied with the difficulty of a single acrostic made a second one out of the final letters of their lines. Of these the most ingenious was Leslie Johnson's Bentley, but exceedingly clever verses were sent in also by D. H. (Forster) and A. C. Simmons (Claire Luce). Naturally most of the entries were complimentary, but Robert Gaffikin's Joad finished:

Young do they die whom gods adore,
Old gas-bags take the other road:
Now you are reaching near five-score,
Ergo, Heav'n must detest you, Joad.

My all-too-successful rival, R. J. P. Hewison, must, alas! be disqualified because he left an L out of my name, and therefore a line out of his acrostic; and Willy Tadpole, who wrote an acrostic on his own name, gets a dusty answer for his cheek.

I suggest that a prize of two guineas goes to G. J. Blundell, one guinea to Tyntax, and half a guinea each to Stanley J. Sharpless, Leslie Johnson, T. St. George, L. E. J., and Hugo Manning.

TO WALTER DE LA MARE

When seventy years still find your vision keen,
And your pure notes of music, long beloved,
Limpid and fresh as they have ever been,
To what rare pleasure will you not have moved
Enchanted minds from now until the sun,
Rising in April on your English skies,
Declares how you, unchanged at ninety-one,
Employ your art in rhythmic harmonies?
Long beyond that may you extend your days;
And finding, then, anew, the winter snows
More beautiful than any flower of May's,
And lovely as the dawn's dew-silvered rose,
Rove still this haunted vale, and, steeped in dream,
Ever more heavenly make earth's beauties seem.

G. J. BLUNDELL

J. B. PRIESTLEY

Ninety plus one leaves nine still to be scored,
In Time, a Yorkshire hundred on the board.
Nine steps ahead—and not yet quite ahead:
Each one a little to the left instead.
Time was when Progress had a queerer run:
You and the Conways played with Time for fun.
Out in the desert, Midnight comes apace:
Now for the Postscript on the human race. . . .
Eternity it seems . . . and yet not *Dunne*.

TYNTAX

TO ALLAN M. LAING ON ATTAINING HIS 91ST BIRTHDAY AND 9100TH PRIZE

Amid the welter of congratulations,
Let me add mine to the N.S. AND NATION'S;
Long may Parnassian foothills yield you fodder,
And keep you witty, wise and free from dodder;
Nine decades' flow of made-to-measure verse,
Lyric and parody, wisecracks gay and terse,
All piping hot—I don't know how you do it:
It's time you took things quietly or you'll rue it;
Now, look, old man (Your good alone I seek),
Go easy—enter each *alternate* week.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

E. C. BENTLEY

Ecstatic days at school with ChestertoN
(Clearly St. Paul's was blest in her alumnI)
Begat the first famed quatrain from your peN,
Eponymous forerunner of its tribE,
Novel in form, a microcosm of wiT.
Thirteen climacterics now have passed you bY;
Long may you live, but when you have to gO,
Early or late, you leave beyond a questioN
Your fame secure upon your middle namE.

LESLIE JOHNSON

SOMERSET MAUGHAM
b. 1874

News of Cape Ferrat's eagle should appear
In '65: *he, in his tenth decade,*
Now contemplates his all-but-final tale.

Eastward from Lambeth moves the cavalcade,
To Florence from Malay; the prose austere
Yet limns the life behind the Painted Veil.

O have no doubt—the hooded eye sees clear;
Nor think, because the Summing-Up is made,
Ergo, there will be no more Cakes and Ale.

T. ST. GEORGE

FOR HILAIRE BELLOC

Not ever did your heart fail you
In full sight of the sea;
Nor you never built you a homestead
Everlasting to lie;
Thirsty with song through Aquitaine
You trod the path to Rome,
(Ora pro nobis, Domina)
Nor ever your bones ceased crying:
"England is house, not home."

L. E. J.

DYLAN THOMAS

Now bird-beast and song and making God in bed,
Illuminate like a nimbus your apocalyptic head,
Ninety-one years on your journey to heaven
Enough nectar there was to excite and leaven
The sullen art flowering on spindrift pages:
Your burning song, far from ivory stages.
"O worms, however, must still be fed," warn angels now as well as sages.
"Not even poets can avoid saying their final prayers,
Ere drinking liquor in hell or reciting verse upstairs."

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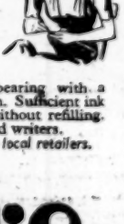

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CANTERBURY University College, Christchurch, New Zealand. Applics. invited for post of full-time Rector. Salary is £2,000 p.a. (New Zealand currency). Allowance is made for travelling exps. Further partics. may be obtained from Secretary, Universities Bureau of the British Empire, 8 Park St. London, W.1. Closing date for receipt of applics. is Sept. 15.

UNIVERSITY of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Applics. invited for Chair of Economics. Salary £1,100×£50—£1,400 p.a., plus a temporary cost of living allowance which at present is £75 p.a. for a member of staff with a wife or other dependents, and £46 16s. for others. Membership of the University Teachers' Provident Fund is compulsory. Allowance is made for travelling exps. Further partics. may be obtained from Secretary, Universities Bureau of the British Empire, 8 Park St. London, W.1. Closing date for receipt of applics. is October 14, 1947.

UNIVERSITY of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Applics. invited for a Lecturer in Economic History. Salary £550×£25 p.a., plus a temporary cost of living allowance which at present is £75 p.a. for a member of staff with a wife or other dependents, and £46 16s. for others. Membership of the University Teachers' Provident Fund is compulsory. Allowance made for travelling expes. Further partics. may be obtained from Secretary, Universities Bureau of the British Empire, 8 Park St. London, W.1. Closing date for receipt of applics. is October 14, 1947.

UNIVERSITY Coll. of Swansea. The Council of the College invites applics. for post of Assistant Lecturer in English. Salary £450 p.a. Appointment will date from Oct. 1, 1947. Further partics. from the Registrar, Univ. College, Singleton Park, Swansea, by whom applics. must be recd. by August 20.

LONDON School of Economics and Political Science (University of London).—Applics. are invited for appointment to an Assistant Lectureship in International Law. Candidates should mention other branches of law which they would be qualified to teach. Applics. are also invited for appointment to an Assistant Lectureship in Geography. Candidates should mention the aspects of their subject in which they are particularly interested. Salary £400 p.a., rising £500 with superannuation and educational allowance. Applics., which should be accompanied by names and addresses of three refs., should be forwarded by Sept. 7, 1947, to the Sec., London School of Economics, Houghton St., Aldwych, W.C.2, from whom further information concerning both appointments may be obtained.

VACANCY exists for Assistant Editor (Male or Female) for a Government Department in Moscow. Candidates must be British born of British-born parents. Good education essential and, if possible, with qualifics. in Economics and Political Theory. Knowledge of Russian, Russian history and affairs is essential. Journalistic exp. desirable. Salary: married man from £600 p.a.; single person £550 p.a. tax free, according to qualifics. Free accommodation and outfit allowance. Applics., giving date of birth, full details of education, qualifics. and posts held (including date), should be addressed to London Appointments Office, Ministry of Labour and National Service, 1-6 Tavistock Sq. London, W.C.1, quoting ref. F.A. 372. Original testimonials should not be forwarded. Only candidates selected for interview will be advised.

B.B.C. invites applics. for Sub-Editors in Overseas News Department, News Division. Candidates should be qualified journalists with all-round sub-editorial exp. Familiarity with the handling of foreign news essential. A feature of the work is the necessity to condense accurately news of all kinds for short factual bulletins. The work involves day and night duty shifts. Max. starting salary £690, rising to £890 p.a. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Overseas News" within 7 days. For acknowledgment enclose stamped add. env.

B.B.C. invites applics. for post of Arabic Typist in the Near Eastern Service at Aldenham, near Edgware, Herts. High typing speed in Arabic and a good knowledge of classical Arabic are essential. Post involves shift duties including some night work. Detailed applics. to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marked "Arabic," within 7 days. For acknowledgment enclose stamped add. envelope.

L.C.C. Psychiatric Social Worker with not more than 2 years' hospital exp., reqd. for 12 months' research work at Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London, with possibility of subsequent permanent appointment on J.N.C. sal. scale. Sal. £370 p.a.-£410 according to exp. Candidates must hold Mental Health Certificate of London School of Economics/equivalent qualific. Applic. form, to be returned by Sept. 10, obtainable from Medical Officer of Health (MHS/B), Public Health Dept. (Mental Health Services), County Hall, Westminster Bridge, S.E.1. (2462.)

COUNCIL of Social Service for Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffs. Organising Secretary. Applics. from men and women invited for above post. Admin. ability and exp. of social work necessary. Qualifics. in Social Science desirable. Salary £300 p.a. Superann. Scheme. Further partics. and applic. form from: Council of Social Service, High St. Chambers, 50 High St. Stoke-on-Trent, to whom applications should be sent by August 31, 1947.

EAST Suffolk and Ipswich Hospital, Ipswich. 350 beds. Training School for Nurses. Home Sister (or Warden) reqd. for Nurses' Homes. S.R.N. pref. but chief qualific. reqd. is an interest in young women preparing themselves for State registration. Social Science Diploma an advantage. Also Asst. Warden to work under Home Sister (or Warden). For further partics. apply to Matron.

Appointments Vacant—continued

COUNTY Borough of Ipswich. Warden—Castle Hill Community Centre. Applics. invited for above appointment which carries a salary in accordance with Grades I and II of National Salary Scales (£330-£405 p.a.), plus cost of living bonus but including emoluments valued at £40 in respect of a flat provided at the Centre. Appointment is subject to the provisions of the Local Government Superann. Act, 1937. Castle Hill is a large house which has been acquired by the Education Committee and which it is hoped to open in the autumn for Youth and Adult activities. Post offers great scope for someone with initiative and a pioneering spirit. Applics., giving age, exp., qualifics. and any other relevant details, together with names of three refs., must be received by Chief Education Officer, 17 Tower St. Ipswich, by August 30. Canvassing will disqualify. If applicant is to his knowledge related to any member or any senior officer of the Council he must disclose that fact in writing when submitting his application.

ACHIMOTA College, Gold Coast. A Domestic Bursar is reqd. for Achimota College. Duties include responsibility for all the catering arrangements for College (700 students) and for cleaning of classrooms and all College buildings other than Houses and Bungalows. Salary according to qualifics. and exp. at a point in scale £600-£970. Free passage, medical attendance and furnished quarters provided. Further partics. of post and application forms may be obtained from Secretary, Achimota Committee, Edinburgh House, 2 Eaton Gate, S.W.1.

STEPNEY Pacifist Service Unit. Organising secy. (male) or male field worker reqd. for Problem Family and Child Welfare work in E. London. Exp. desirable, but right approach chief consideration. Salary—acc. to qualns.—up to £4 3s. wkly. plus lodging. Apply Sec., 6/355, The Highway, E.1.

WANTED immediately: 1. Senior Housemaster (Orthodox Jewish), salary £400-£500 p.a. according to exp. with annual increments of £40 to £600. 2. Housemaster (Orthodox Jewish), salary £225 p.a. with annual increments of £15 to £300, both appointments with full residential emoluments. Apply in writing to Principal, Jewish Orphanage, West Norwood, S.E.27.

EXPERIENCED welfare workers (either sex) required for rehabilitation work among Jewish D.P.s in Italy. Knowledge of German, Italian or Yiddish. Jewish Committee for Relief Abroad, 7 Endsleigh Place, W.C.1.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE Educ. Cttee. The Village College, Bottisham—Secondary Modern School (boys and girls). Qualified Assistant Mistress to take charge of English throughout the School, with an interest in Drama. The Village College, Sawston—Secondary Modern School. Qualified Assistant Master whose chief duties would be the responsibility for the boys' Physical Training. Applic. forms, which should be returned as soon as possible, may be obtained on receipt of stamped addressed foolscap env., from Chief Education Officer (S), Shire Hall, Cambridge.

WANTED by recognised, progressive, co-educational school, junior teacher for about 16 children, 7-9. Good conditions. 45 miles ex London, Burnham Scale. Box 8273.

WHITTINGEHAME College, Brighton. (1) Senior English Master, resident, to teach up to Higher School Cert. Standard; (2) Science, Physics and Chemistry Master, resident, to teach to School Cert. Standard. Revised Burnham scale. Apply, giving full partics., to Headmaster.

WANTED for Sept., first-class resid. lecturer in Econs., English. The Cygnet's House, 91 Queen's Gate, S.W.7. Write Secy.

DR. Barnardo's Staff Training School, Woodford Bridge, Essex. Required in Sept., tutor in Child Psychology, full or part-time, preferably resident. One or more supporting subjects helpful. Apply the Principal.

NURSERY-Governess is reqd. by the Warden of University House, Bethnal Green, London, E.2, whose wife has recently died, for the care of his two children, aged 6 and 3 years. Both attend school. Salary by arrangement.

TYLEHURST School, Forest Row, Sussex, urgently requires Froebel or similar trained teacher for 5-6 year group—also woodwork teacher, maintenance man and cook interested in food-reform diet.

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B.B.C. requires Secretaries, Shorthand Typists, Dictation Typists (British) in London. Please write, stating age and exp., to Appointments Officer, Broadcasting House, London, W.1, marking applics. "Shorthand Typists." Only candidates selected for interview will receive acknowledgment.

FULL-TIME Women Interviewers, age 25-45, reqd. for commercial and social surveys in London and Provinces. Applicants should have capacity to understand purposes of research, to interview all sections of the public, and be able to work away from home when necessary. Apply in writing, stating age, educ. and salary earned to: Research Services, Ltd. (F.W.), 101 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2.

Appointments Vacant—continued

METROPOLITAN Borough of Finsbury. Appointment of Shorthand-Typists. Applics. invited for appointment, on permanent staff, of Shorthand-Typists (21 and upwards) at sal. of £268 p.a., rising by annual increments of £12 to £304, plus cost-of-living bonus, at present £48 2s. p.a. Experience in office of a local authority an advantage. Applics., stating age, experience and qualifics., with copies of 3 recent testims., must be received by Sept. 6. The successful applicant(s) will be required to pass medical exam. and to contribute to the Council's Superannuation Fund. John E. Fishwick, Town Clerk, Finsbury Town Hall, Rosebery Avenue, E.C.1.

MARKET Research Interviewers: C.W.S. Market Research Dept. has vacancies (full-time) for expd. interviewers (women). Vacancies occur in various centres, but applicants must be prepared to work for short periods in any part of the country. State age, exp. and salary reqd., to "Market Research," C.W.S., Ltd., 1 Balloon St. Manchester, 4.

ARCHITECT reqs. from Sept. experienced private secretary with knowledge of elementary book-keeping. 9.30-6. Sats. 12.30, with alternate Sats free. Congenial working conditions and excellent prospects for right candidate. Salary according to qualifics. H. V. Lobb, 20 Gower St. W.C.1. Museum 8575.

TRADE Federation requires experienced shorthand typist; copy typist; office girl or boy. Good prospects. Hours 9 to 5.30. Five-day week. Write Box 736, L.P.E., 110 St. Martin's Lane, W.C.2.

SHORTHAND-Typist, to undertake secretarial work for Heads of Departments, required in October. Sal. £4 p.w. Applics. should be made in writing to the Secy., King's College of Household and Social Science (University of London), Campden Hill Rd. W.8.

FULL-TIME Business Manager urgently reqd. for French monthly magazine to be published in London. Good knowledge of French essential. Apply in writing, Box 8567.

GOOD home and salary offered to someone willing to help farmer's wife with two little boys aged 2 yrs. and 6 mths. Mrs. Cook, Huish Barton, nr. Washford, Somerset.

HOUSEKEEPER, resident, wanted to cook, clean for 2-3 gentlemen, launder, mend for one, Earl's Court district. Box 8191.

Appointments Wanted

DUTCH lady (25), now English by marriage, expd. secretary/shorthand-typist, fluent English, French, German and Dutch, seeks post where her linguist knowledge can be utilised. Box 8201.

COMPANION-Help, etc. Educated Norwegian girl, exp. hotel reception work, typist, wishing improve, fair knowl. English, willing accept any work. Write Solkrim, Storhamargt 24, Hamar, Norway.

CAPABLE cook-housekeeper or domestic help, exp., 41, London/near. Box 8229.

LADY (33), book-keeper, shthand. typist (Matric.), 17 years agricultural merchant's office, desires change—anything interesting and prog., willing travel. Box 8236.

YOUNG lady secretary (shorthand-typist) requires interesting position preferably with either a literary or professional background. Box 8261.

EXPERIENCED business woman travelled Europe seeks post as assistant/secretary to business man with headquarters in London whose activities take him travelling. Box 8267.

FRENCH woman graduate, age 24, with good degree, seeks work Oct., 1947, to Oct., 1948, in Adult education, research, journalism, etc. Please write Mlle. Ringuet, 1 Upper Redlands Rd. Reading. Excellent references.

YNG. ex-Serv. man, 7 yrs. Forces, retd. to blind alley, wd. welcome fr. start. empltt. w. prspcts. Linguist, mod. and cl., H. Schl. Cert. stds., mus., trvld. abrd. Lvg. allnce. drg. training acceptble. Suggtns.? Box 8324.

YNG. lady (28), M.A. (Fr., Ger.), B.Sc. (Econ.), 6½ yrs. teaching, sks. change. Suggestions welcomed. Box 8326.

CAPABLE secretary (39) wants part-time work with London professional man or politician. Box 8329.

MARRIED woman, 27, with child nine months, sks. resident post. Nine years secretarial exp. and three months preliminary nursing trng. Would look after children, do sec. work and light housework. Box 8330.

WANTED September, London area, post in school or other estab. where exp. of children can be gained. Ex-Service man, aged 25. Trained in architecture and Art. Outdoor activities. Riding. Dramatics. Some teaching exp. Intd. in prog. methods and co-ed. Box 8344.

B.A., Cantab. (29), male, single, 4½ years' exp. indus. costing and statistics, lit. interests, knowl. French, Italian, sks. interesting work, industrial/other. Box 8353.

ASST. Master (Public School man), 40's, desires resident post Sept. Latin, French to P.S. Scholarship and S. Cert. Disciplne. Not games. Write Box 157, Aldridges, 1 Whitefriars St. London, E.C.4.

EXPERIENCED Secretary-Receptionist requires interesting post with opportunity to travel. Box 8371.

WOMAN grad. (28), Hons. degree English, sks. interesting post, pref. with Left Wing polit. organisation. Typing. Box 8384.

PART-time job, abt. 28 hrs. wkly., wanted by intelligent woman secretary (40). Excellent French (almost bi-lingual), moderate German, editl. exp., sh./typ. Willing travel occasionally. Wd. consider non-res. hsekpr./sec. to M.P./journalist/economist with internat. interests. Exc. refs. Sal. £5. Box 8379.

EDUCATED woman, 40's, hard working, conscientious, sks. interesting work offering scope, initiative and responsibility. Social service, secretarial, etc. Box 283, c/o 7, Coptic St. W.C.1.

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